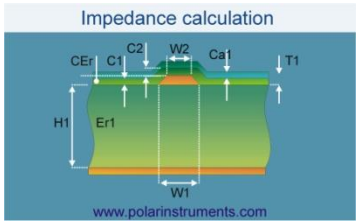
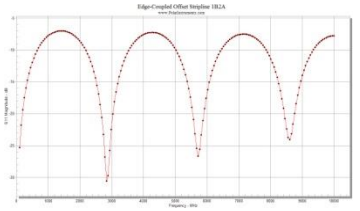
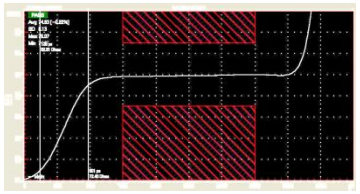
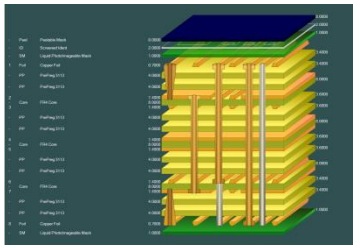
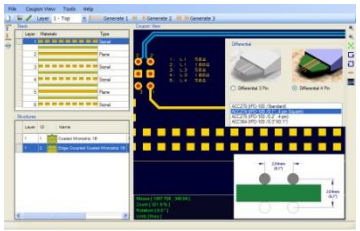


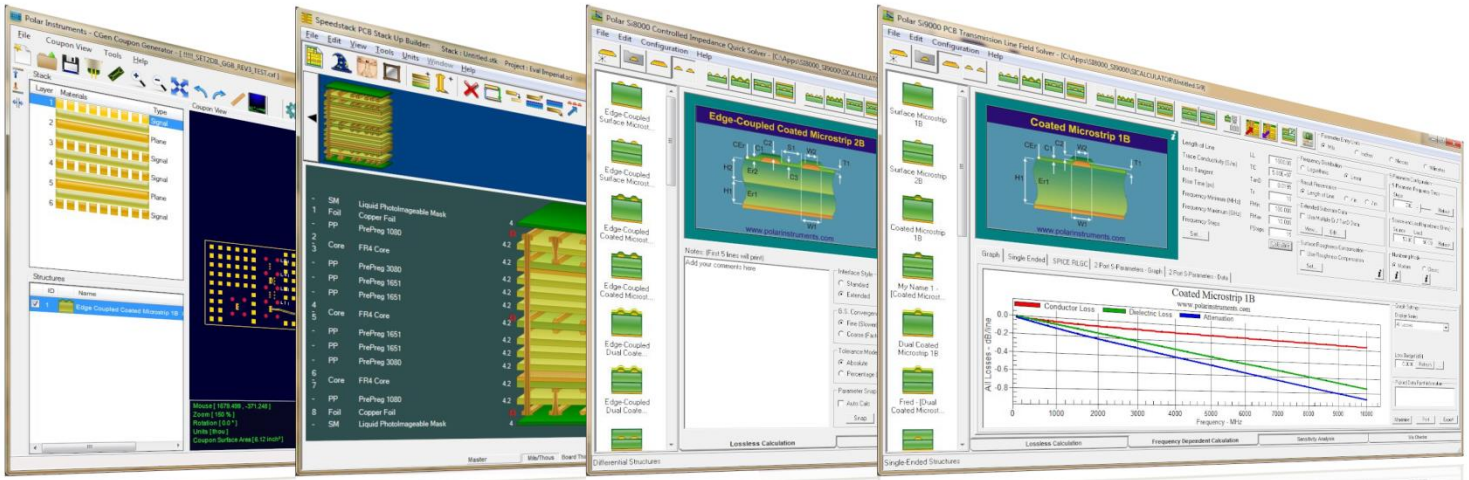







# Getting Started with Speedstack

Richard Attrill - July 2016



## Welcome to Speedstack

This Getting Started tutorial will familiarize you with the features and operation of Polar's Speedstack PCB Stackup Builder and guide you through the steps to create a Speedstack project (.sci) file. The completed project file is available as a free download from the Polar Instruments web site.

Download the project file for reference and help in creating your own projects.

# Welcome to Speedstack

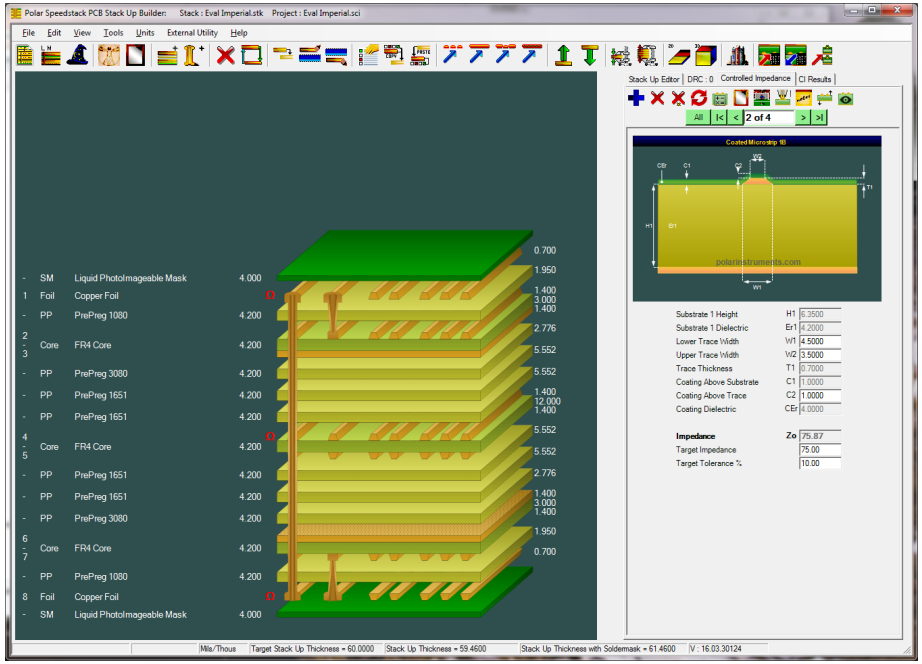
Speedstack is a comprehensive stack up design environment for pre-layout engineers, PCB fabricators and value-add PCB brokers. By collating libraries of materials, costs and suppliers with critical design data, such as transmission line specifications or impedance control, Speedstack lets you produce accurate build documentation.

Speedstack's end-to-end approach to stack up design allows you to create documents that can be shared at every stage of the PCB supply chain and drastically reduces the time you need to create, document and control PCB layer stack ups.

Speedstack links directly with the Si8000m Controlled Impedance and the Si9000e Transmission Line Design field solvers

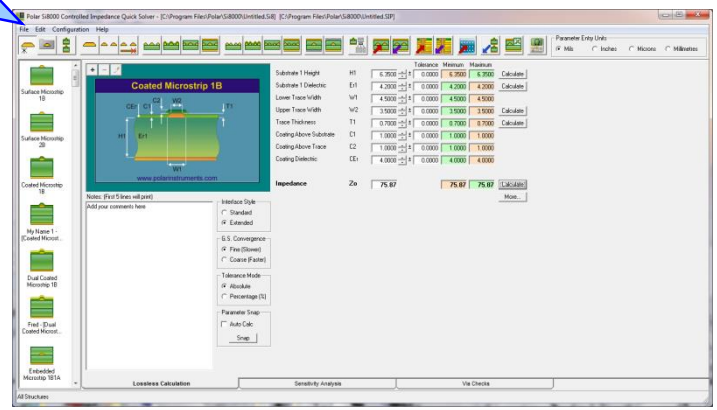
# Controlled Impedance and Insertion Loss Modelling

## Speedstack

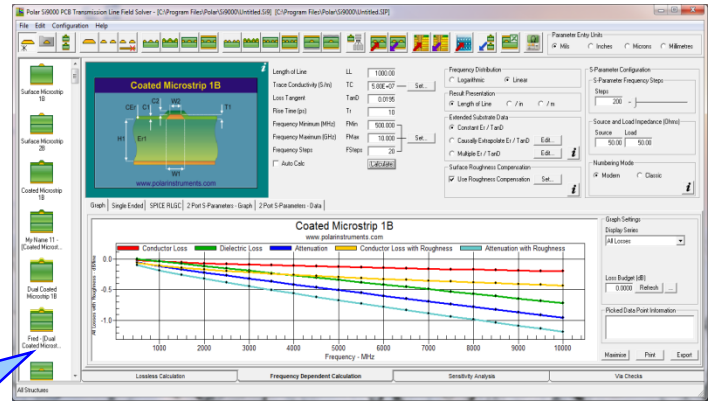


Si8000m Controlled Impedance System

## Si8000m



## Si9000e



Si9000e Loss Modelling System

## Speedstack – Methods of creating stackups

Speedstack has two key methods to create stack ups:

•Virtual Material Mode (VMM) – uses ‘virtual’ materials to generate stack ups. This is useful for exploring design options before committing to real materials.

•Material Library Mode – uses real materials to generate stack ups by referencing the Speedstack material library. This method provides an absolute definition of the stack up down to the exact materials used in the build.

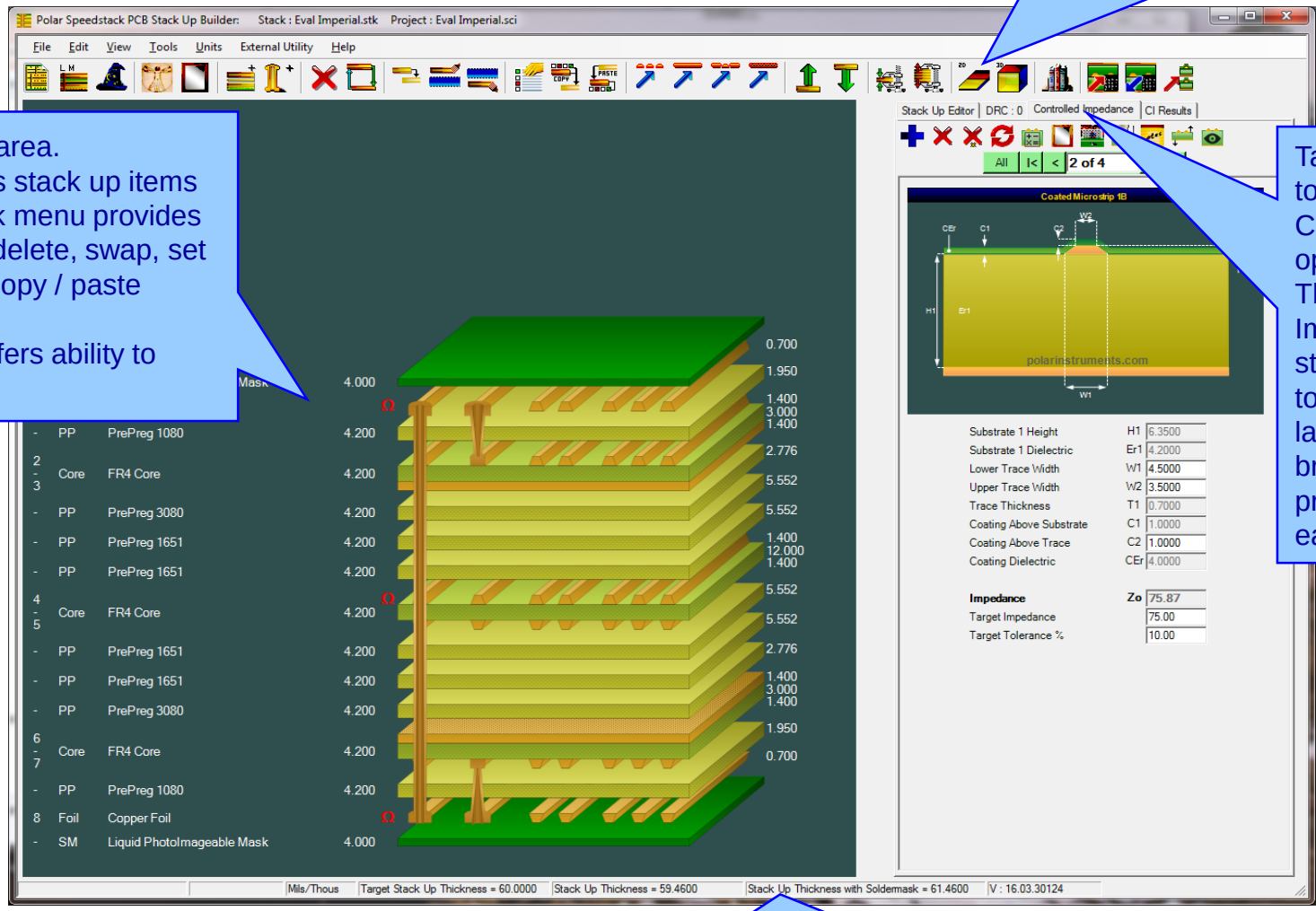
The principle of building stack ups with Speedstack is the same regardless of the method used. The following slides will guide you through the process.

# Speedstack – Introducing the interface

Toolbar provides access to commonly used functions included add, delete and swap materials.

Stack up editor area.
Left-click selects stack up items (blue), right-click menu provides options to add, delete, swap, set properties and copy / paste materials.
Mouse wheel offers ability to zoom in / out

Tabs provide access to Stack Up, DRC and Controlled Impedance options.
The Controlled Impedance tab allows structures to be added to the stack on a per layer basis. The browser buttons provide access to each structure




Stack up thickness can be monitored via the status bar

## Building a stack up from scratch

The following slides will guide you through the process of creating an 8 layer stack up. The stack has the following specification:

Units: Mils

Number of Layers: 8

Target Stack Up Thickness: 60 mils ± 10%

Signal Layers: 1, 3, 6, 8 Plane Layers: 2, 4, 5, 7. Symmetrical build

Material: Standard FR4, nominal dielectric constant ~ 4.2

Preferred Core Thickness: 8 mils

Copper Thickness: All layers 1oz copper, 1.4 mils

## Building a stack up from scratch (continued)

Solder Mask: Covering outer layers, 1 mil

PTH drill passes: layers 1 – 8

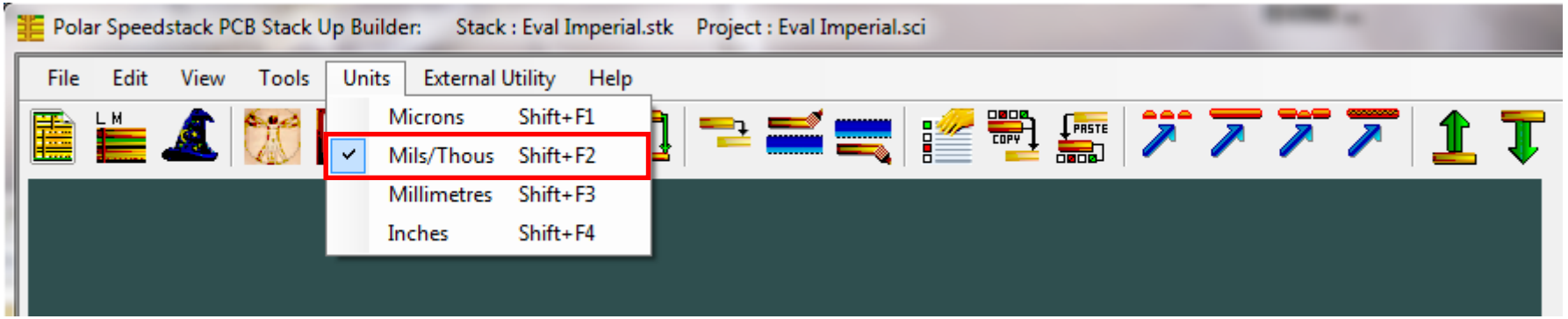
Laser microvia passes: layers 1 – 2, 8 – 7

Singled-ended impedance: 50 ohms ± 10% on layers 1, 3, 6, 8

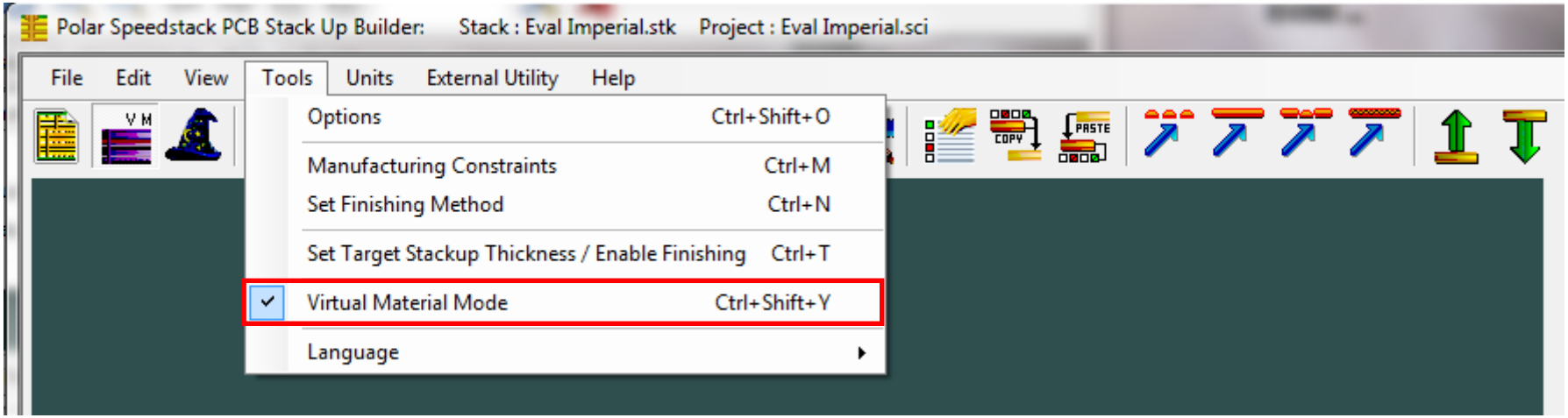
Differential impedance: 100 ohms ± 10% on layers 1, 3, 6, 8

# Step 1: Setting the Units and Virtual Material Mode

## From the Units menu select the ‘Mils/Thou’ option

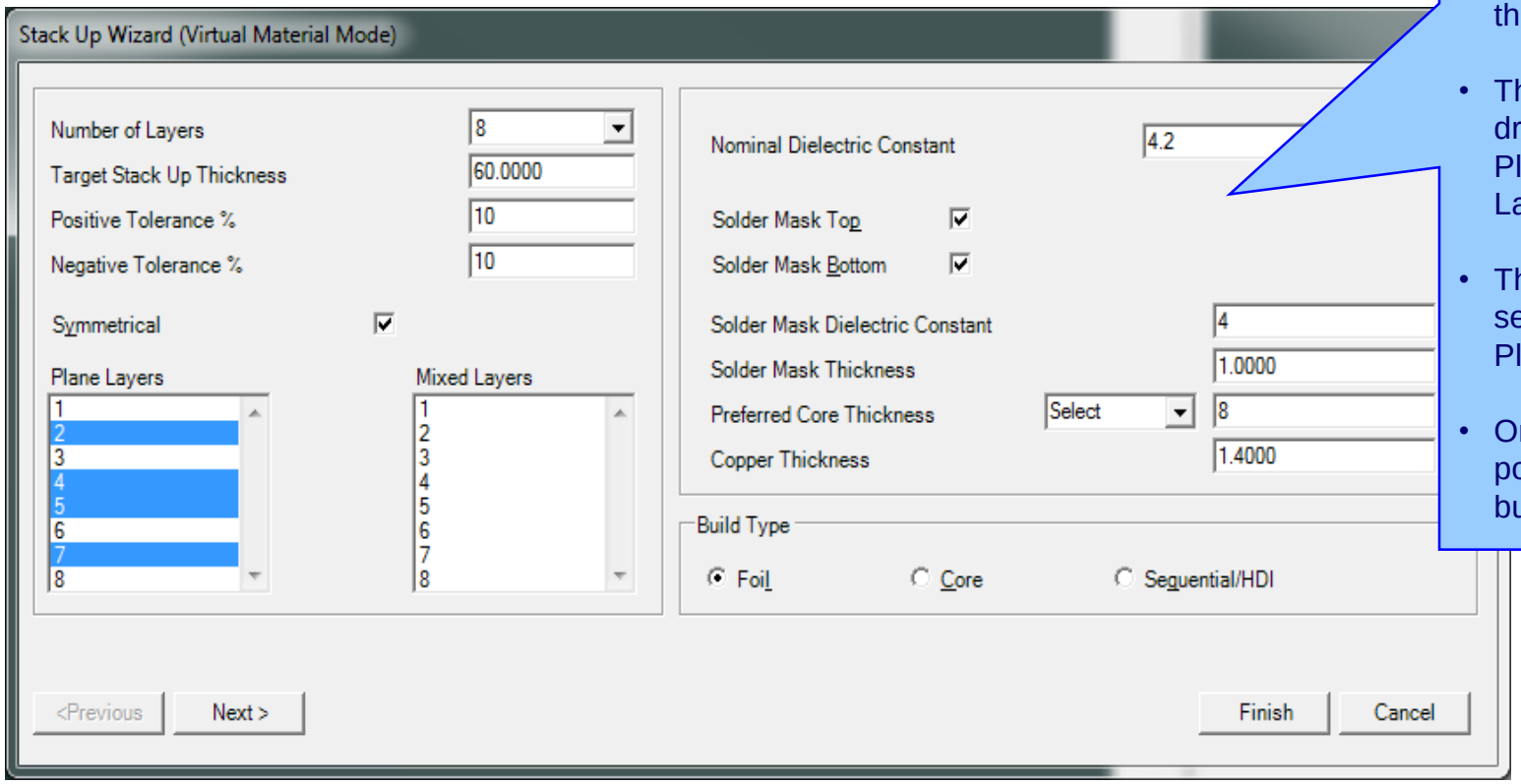



## From the Tools menu select the ‘Virtual Material Mode option



# Step 2: Using the Stack Up Wizard to rapidly build the stack up

## Select the Stackup Wizard toolbar icon




- Enter the Basic Stack Data as previously described in the stack up specification
- The Number of Layers dropdown will populate the Plane Layers and Mixed Layers lists
- The Symmetrical checkbox setting will control how the Plane Layers are selected
- Once the fields are populated select the Finish button

# Step 2: Using the Stack Up Wizard (continued)

An option to enter the Stack Up Properties can be skipped

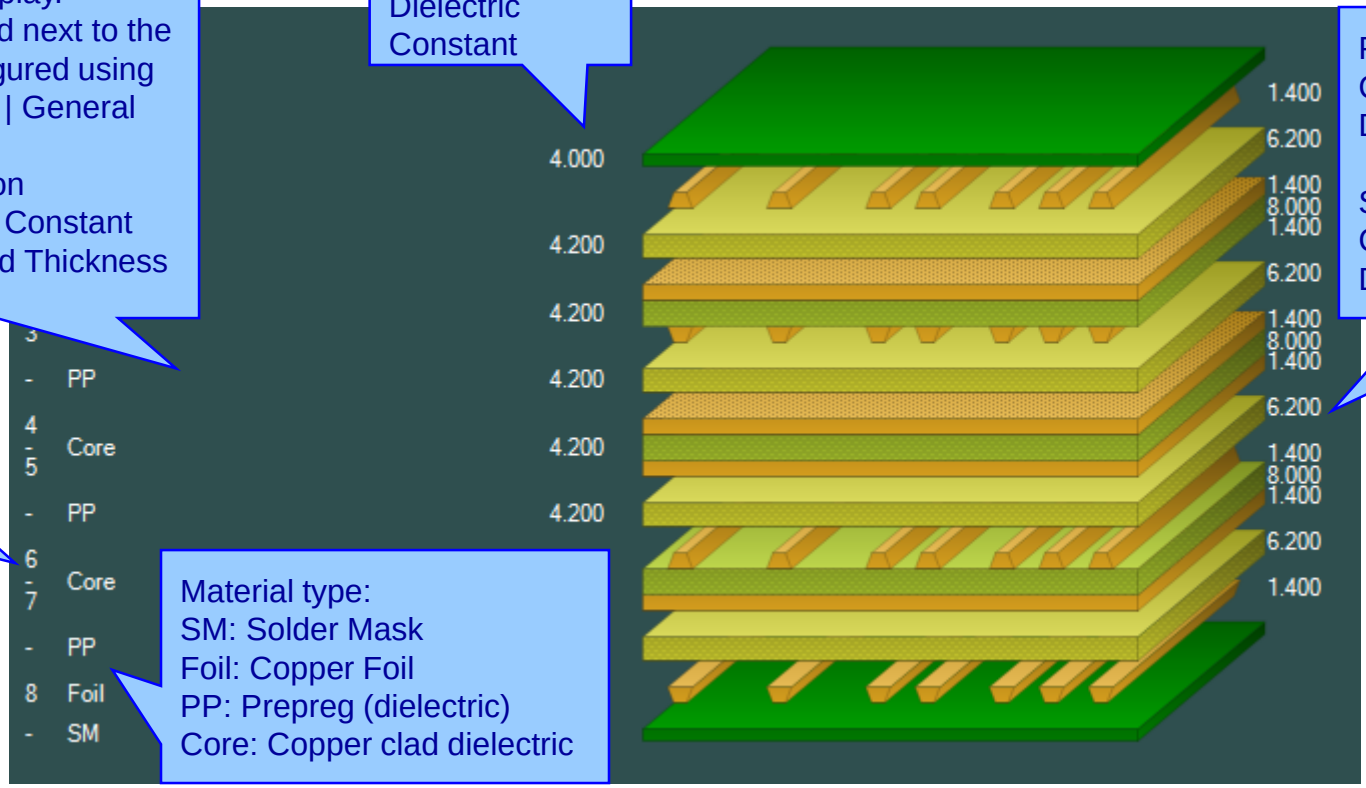
The stack up created by the Wizard will now be displayed

Configuring the display.
The fields displayed next to the stack can be configured using the Tools | Options | General tab. In this case:
Field 3 = Description
Field 4 = Dielectric Constant
Field 5 = Processed Thickness

Dielectric Constant

Processed Thickness:
Copper Finished Thickness
Dielectric Isolation Distance

Stack Up Thickness =
Copper Finished Thickness+
Dielectric Isolation Distance




Electrical Layer Number

Material type:
SM: Solder Mask
Foil: Copper Foil
PP: Prepreg (dielectric)
Core: Copper clad dielectric

## Step 3: Saving the Speedstack project

Now that a stack has been created we can save it

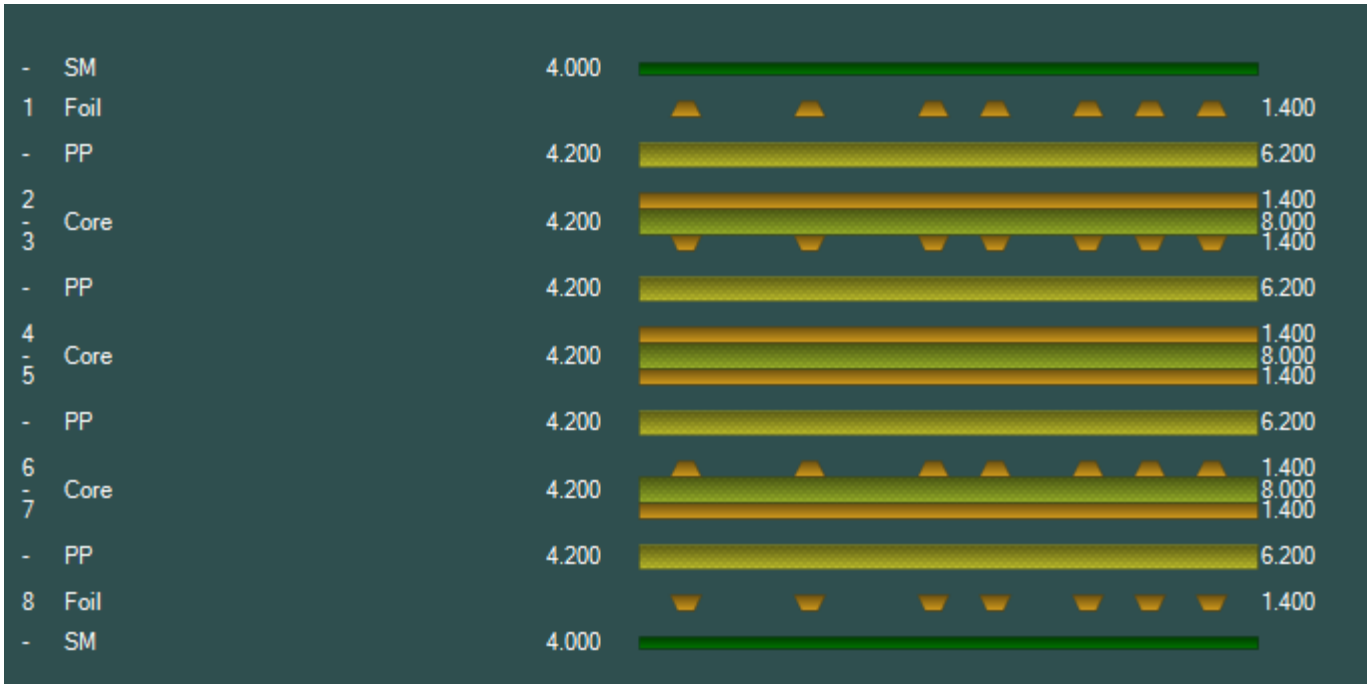
Use the File | Save Project As menu option and specify a filename

The filename will have a .SCI extension, recognisable by this icon 

# Step 4: Switching between 3D and 2D display modes

It is sometimes easier to view stack up in 2D by selecting 


This will result in the following stack up display

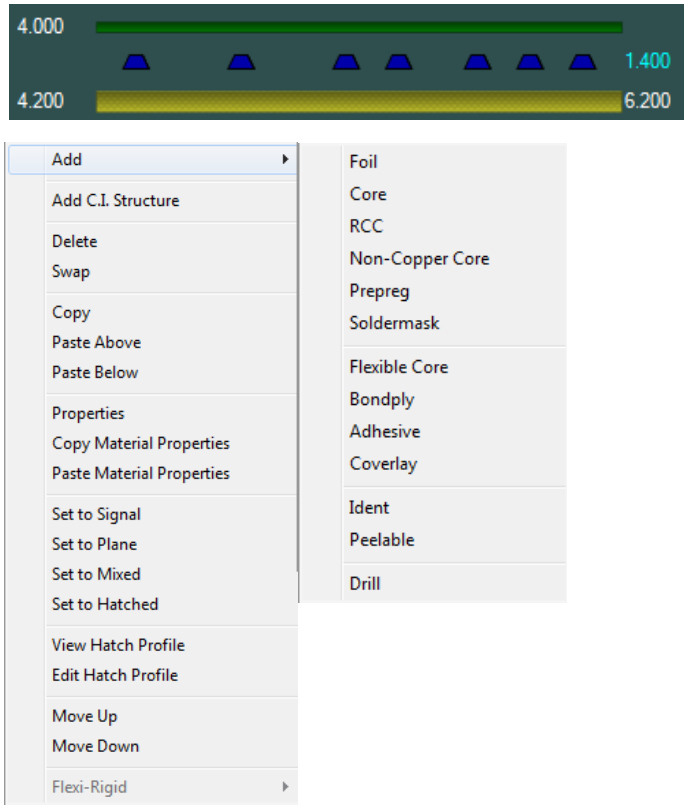



The 3D display mode can be activated by selecting 

# Step 4: Editing the stack up

Once the stack up has been created using the Wizard it is possible to make changes on a per material basis using the various editing functions

- Click on the material that you wish to edit
- Selected material will highlight in blue
- Use the right-click menu and select option or use toolbar icons



## Step 4: Editing the stack up (continued)

Add: Adds the chosen material above or below the selected item 

Delete: Removes the selected material 

Swap: Swaps material with another of the same type 

Copy: Copies the selected material to clipboard 

Paste Above: Pastes the copied material above selected item 

Paste Below: Pastes the copied material below selected item 

Move Up: Move the selected material up one position 

Move Down: Move the selected material down one position 

Properties: Change the properties of the selected material 

## Step 4: Editing the stack up – electrical layers only

Signal: Set electrical layer to signal 

Plane: Set electrical layer to plane 

Mixed: Set electrical layer to mixed 

Hatched: Set electrical layer to hatched (separately licensed) 

Setting the electrical layer types on the stack up will allow Speedstack to guide you through the process of adding controlled impedance structures. It will suggest the appropriate structure based on the signal layer and plane layer positions within the stack. More details will be shown in Step 6.

## Step 4: Editing the stack up – symmetrical mode

Many stack ups are symmetrical, so viewing from the centre the upper and lower sections of the stack up have exactly the same materials

Speedstack allows you to work in symmetrical mode by selecting  This is a toggle function, selecting this option again disables this mode

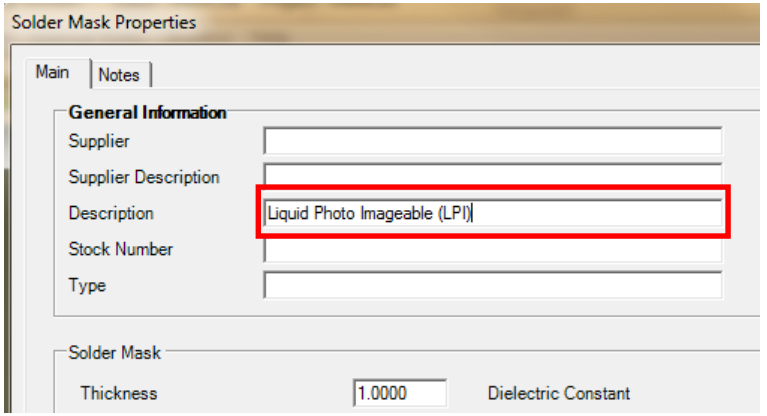
When this mode is enabled the editing functions will process both the upper and lower materials of the stack simultaneously, saving significant time.

# Step 4: Editing the stack up – change material properties

All the information about each material is stored in the material properties. To change properties of the stack created by the Wizard

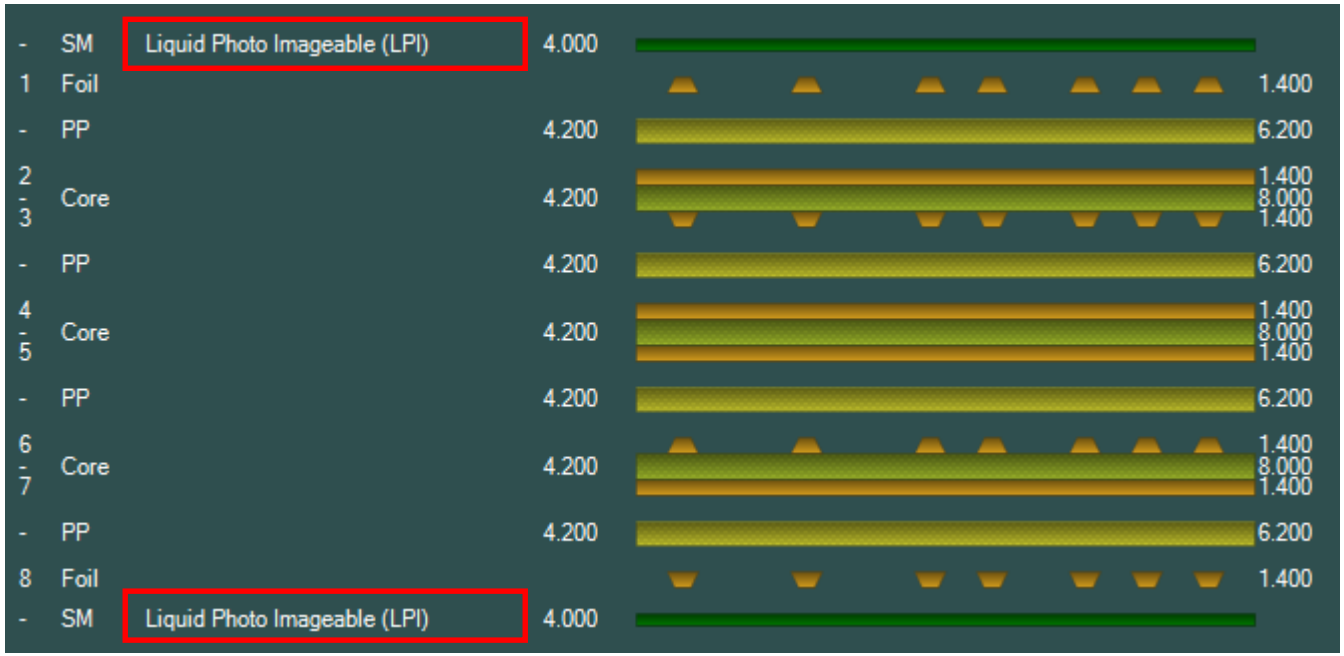
- Enable symmetrical mode 
- Select the top solder mask layer 

- Select Properties 
- Enter text in the Description field
- Select Apply to store information



# Step 4: Editing the stack up – change material properties (cont'd)

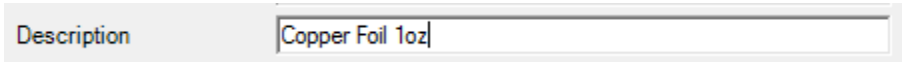
The stack up will now display the solder mask description text



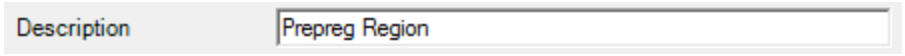
# Step 4: Editing the stack up – change material properties (cont'd)

Repeat the process to set properties for the other materials

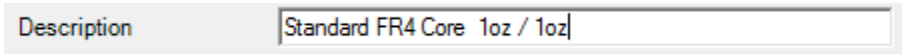
- Foil properties




- Prepreg properties



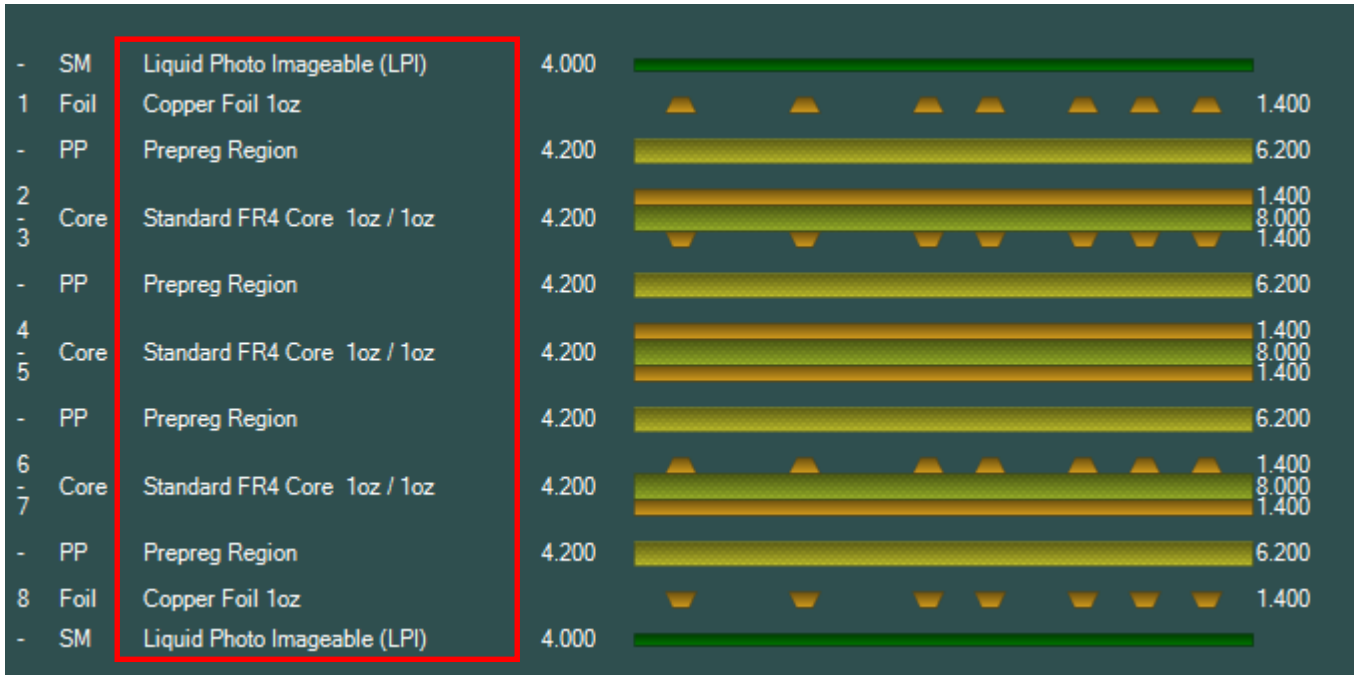

- Core properties




- When complete disable symmetrical mode

# Step 4: Editing the stack up – change material properties (cont'd)

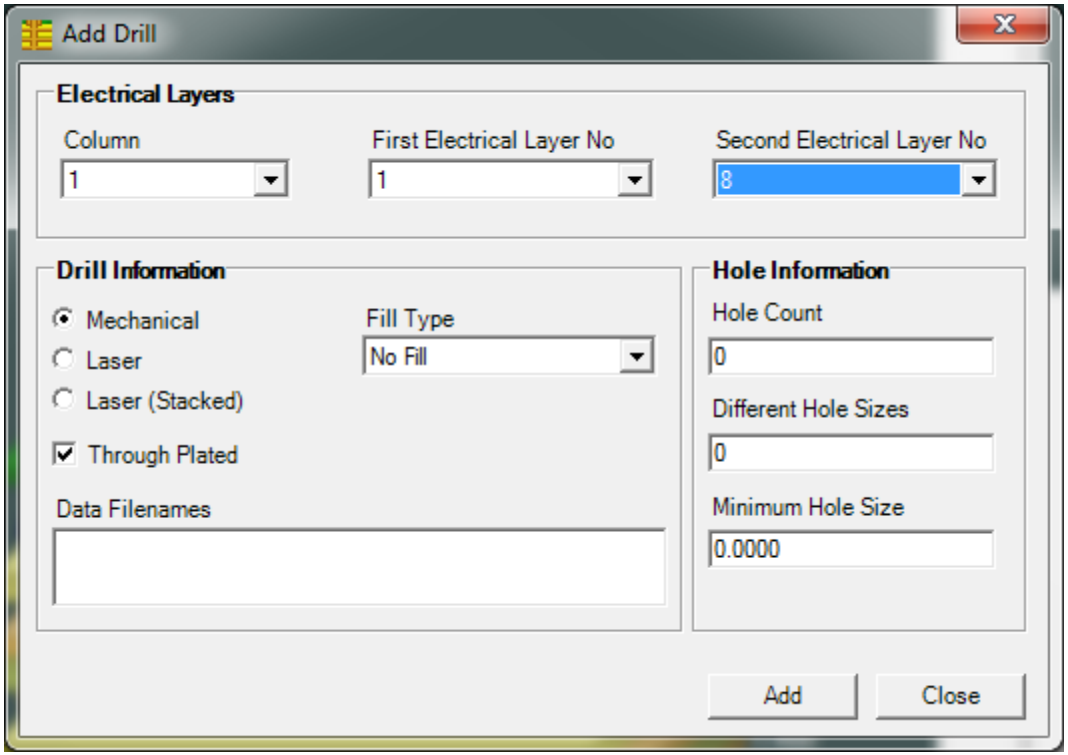
The stack up will now display description properties for all materials



# Step 5: Adding drilling information

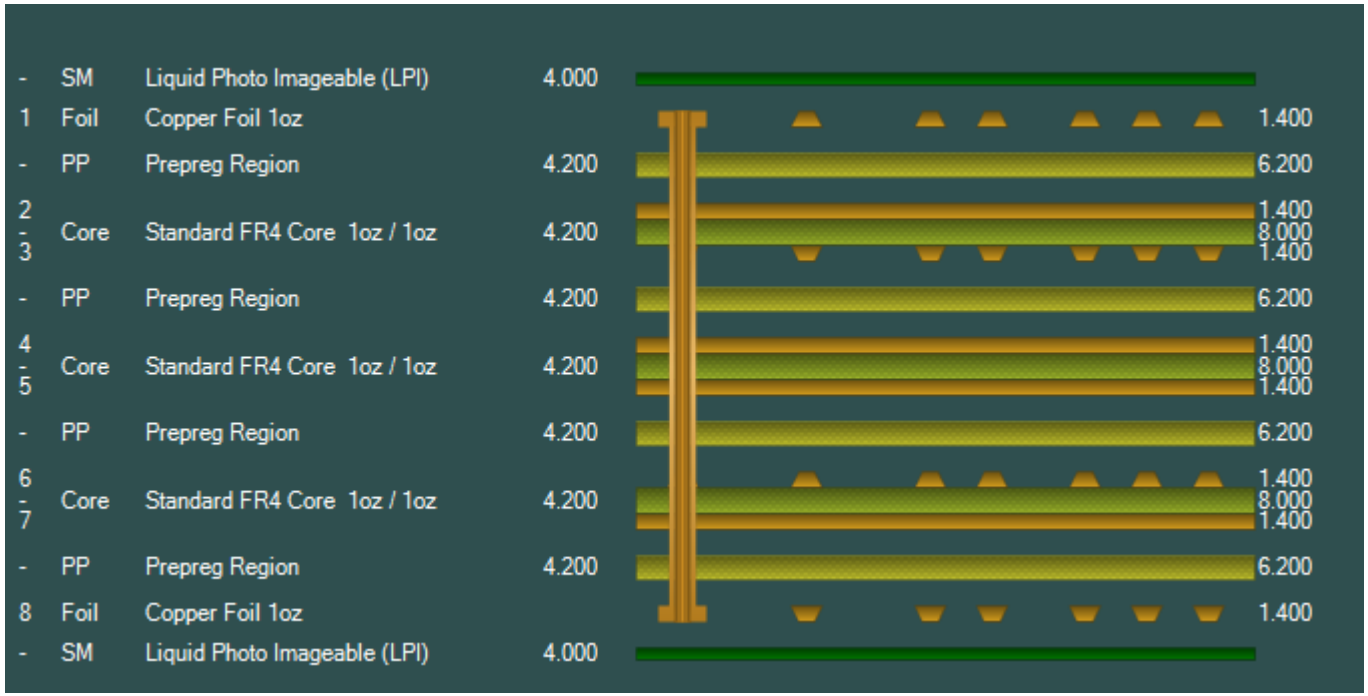
Select the Add Drill toolbar icon 

- Select the Column where the drill will be added to the stack.  1 is the left-most column.
- Set the First and Second Electrical Layer Numbers, in this case a PTH drill will start on layer 1 (top) and end on layer 8 (bottom)
- Select Add to add the drill



# Step 5: Adding drilling information (continued)

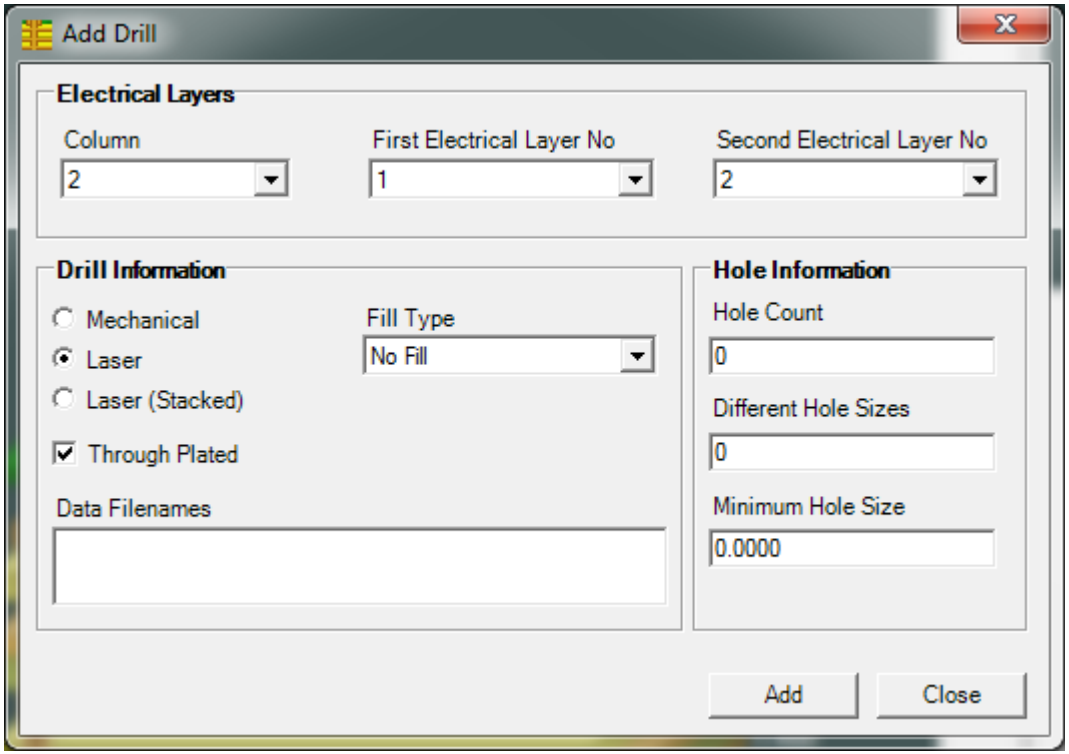
## The stack up will now display the Plated Through Hole (PTH) drill



# Step 5: Adding drilling information (continued)

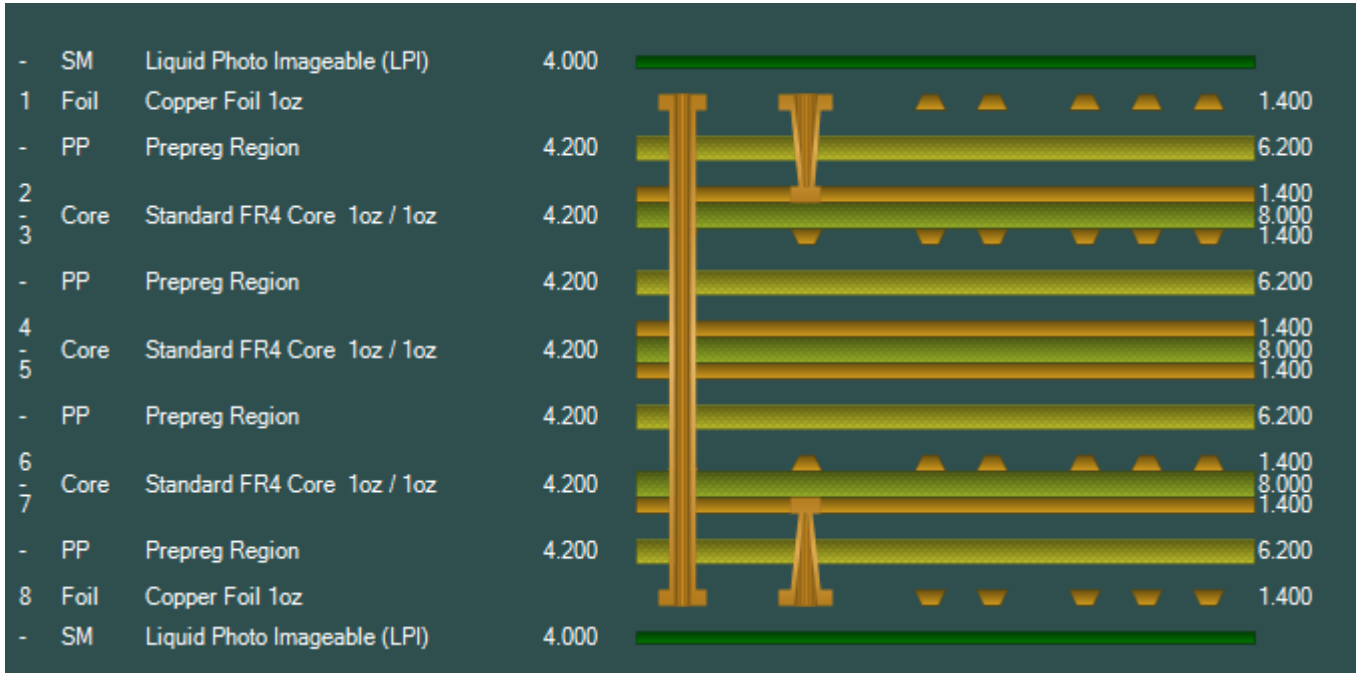
Now we will add the laser microvias. Select the Add Drill toolbar 

- Select Column = 2
- Set the First and Second Electrical Layer Numbers, in this case the drill will start on layer 1 and end on layer 2
- Select Laser
- Select Add to add the drill
- Repeat the process, Column = 2, First = 8, Second = 7, select Laser
- Select Add to add the drill



# Step 5: Adding drilling information (continued)

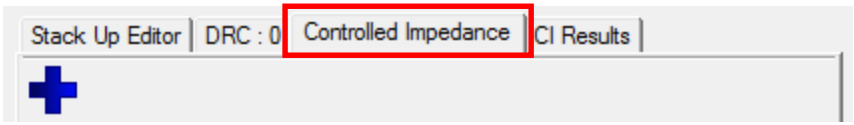
At this stage the stack up will display all the required drilling information

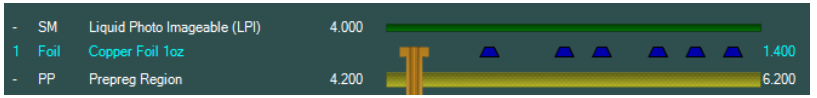


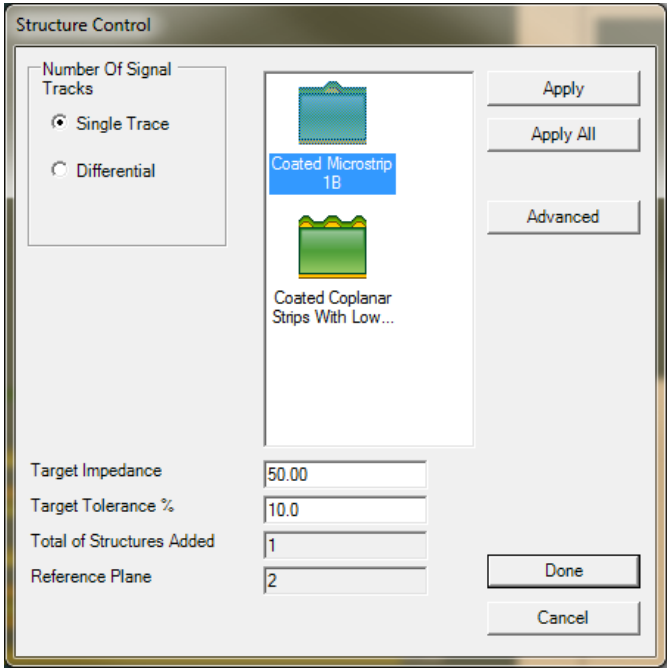

This is an appropriate stage to save the stack up project as described in Step 3.

# Step 6: Adding impedance structures

- Select the Controlled Impedance tab
- Click on the signal layer of the stack where the structure is to reside, in this case layer 1
- Select ✚ to add a structure, the Structure Control dialog will be displayed. Only structures appropriate to layer 1 will be offered.
- Enter Target Impedance and Tolerance as shown, select 'Coated Microstrip 1B' icon, Apply and then Done to dismiss dialog



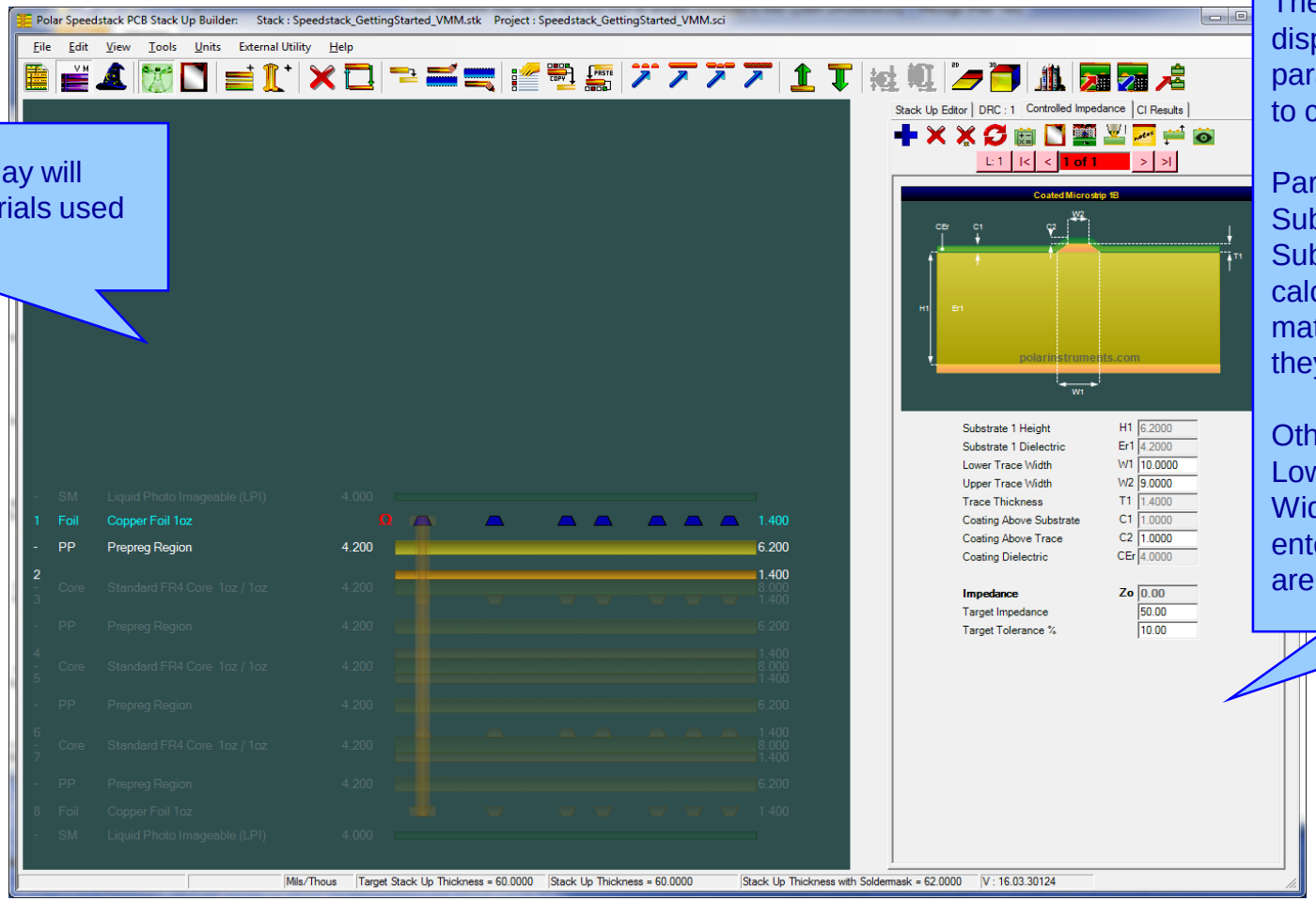



# Step 6: Adding impedance structures (continued)

## The new structure will appear on the controlled impedance tab

The stack up display will highlight the materials used by the structure



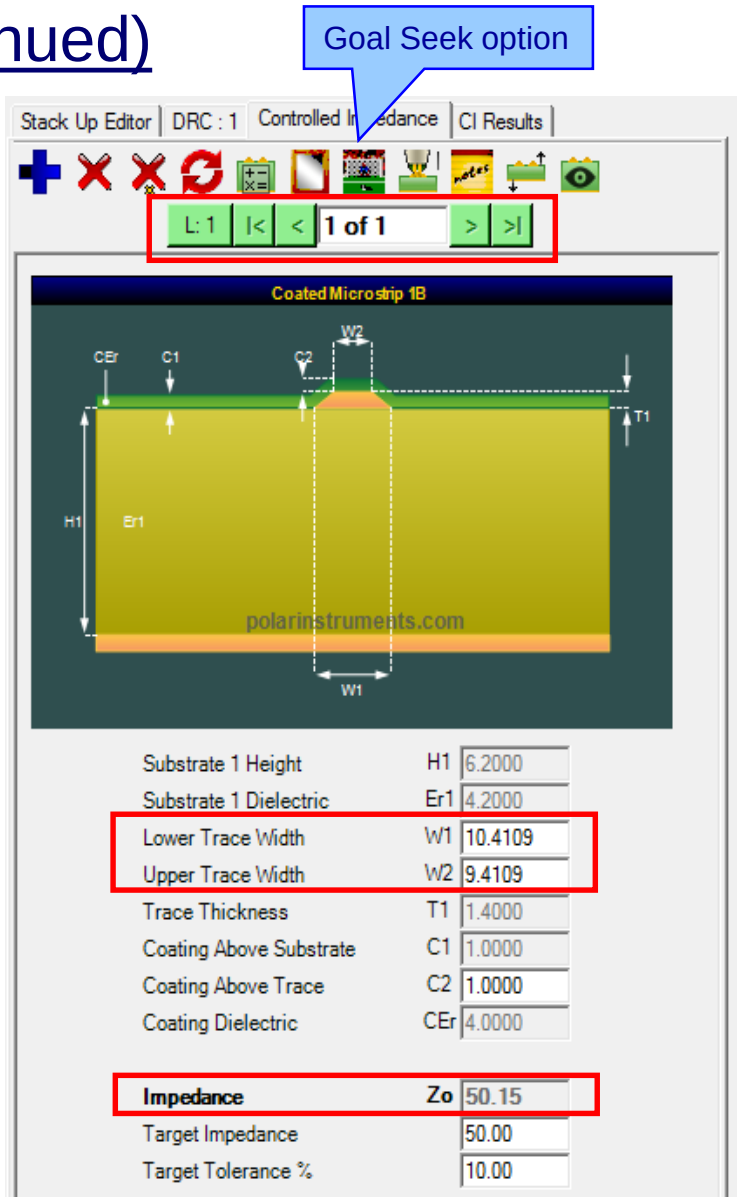

The structure image is displayed together with the parameters that are required to calculate the impedance.

Parameters such as Substrate Height (H1) and Substrate Dielectric (Er1) are calculated from the stack up materials used. Therefore, they are read-only.

Other parameters such as Lower and Upper Trace Widths (W1 / W2) may be entered by the user, these are read/write fields.

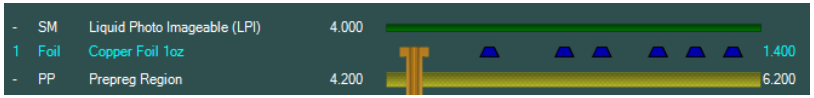
# Step 6: Adding impedance structures (continued)

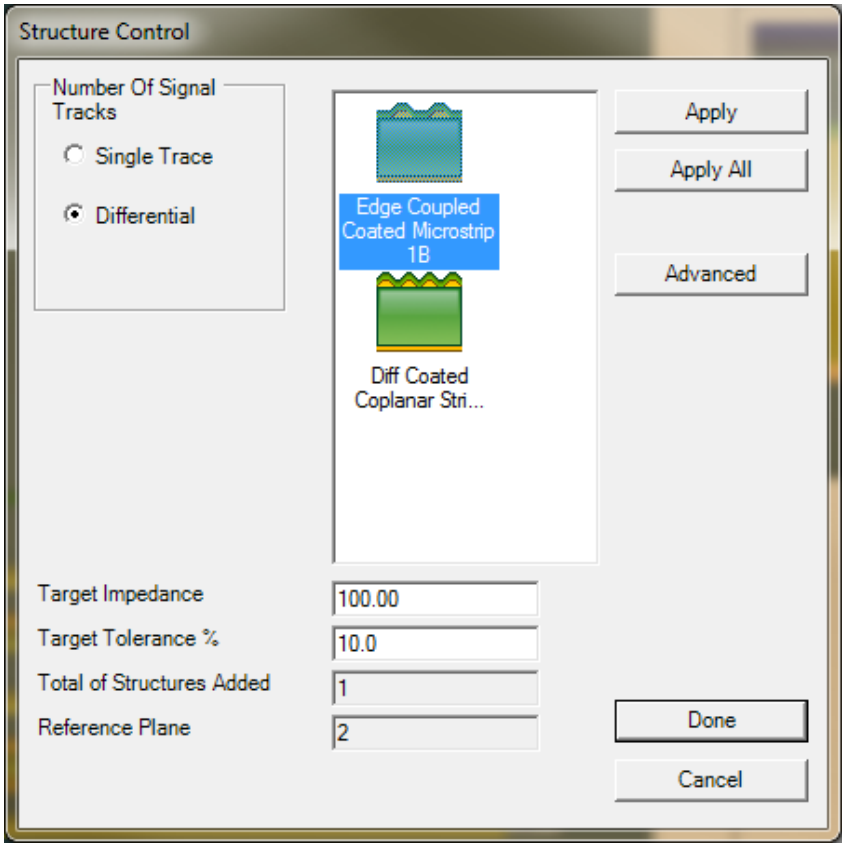
- Key in the desired trace widths
- Click on the to Rebuild and Calculate the impedance structures
- Notice that the Impedance (Zo) result updates
- Use the option to Goal Seek parameter(s) in order that the Target Impedance is met. Select ‘W1 / W2 only’ and watch Speedstack adjust these parameters to achieve the 50 ohms Target Impedance
- Notice that the trace widths (W1/W2) and the impedance results (Zo) updates
- Green indicator denotes within tolerance



# Step 6: Adding impedance structures - differential

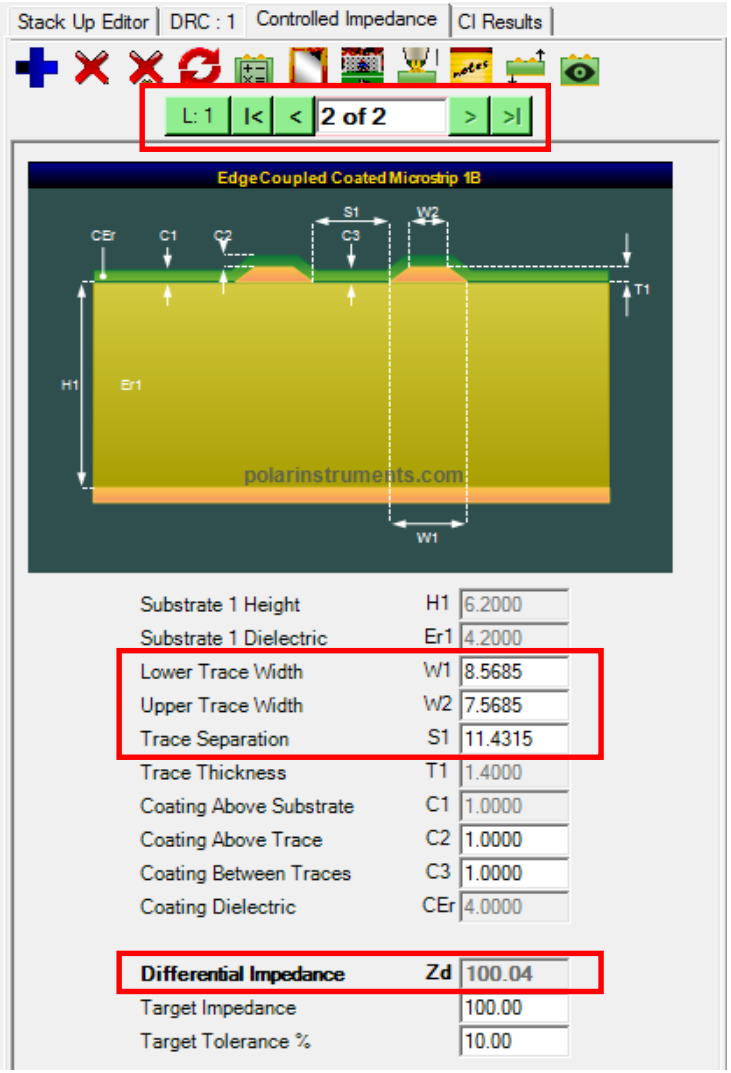
- Click on layer 1 of stack
- Select ✚ to add a structure, select Differential, enter Target Impedance and Tolerance as shown, choose ‘Edge Coupled Coated Microstrip 1B’, Apply and then Done to dismiss dialog
- The differential structure will be added to the stack. Notice that this is structure 2 of 2.



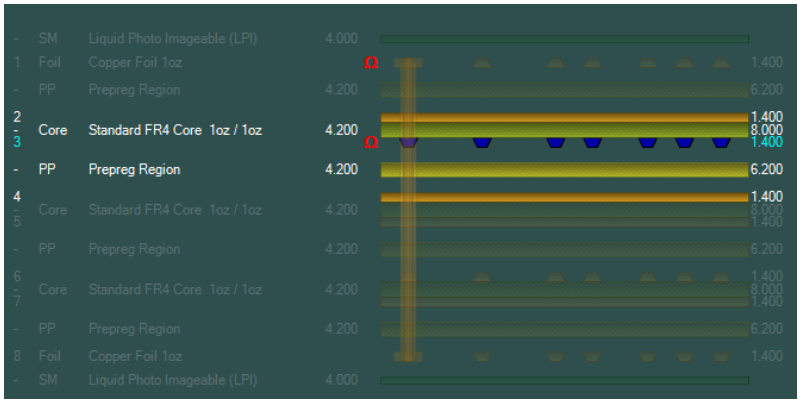
# Step 6: Adding impedance structures - differential

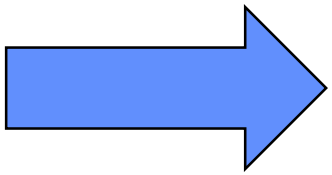
- Key in the desired trace widths / separation
- Use the  option to Goal Seek parameter(s) in order that the Target Impedance is met. Select ‘W1 / W2 constant pitch’ and watch Speedstack adjust these parameters to achieve the 100 ohms Target Impedance
- Notice that the trace widths and separation (W1 / W2 / S1) and the impedance results (Zd) updates
- Green indicator denotes within tolerance

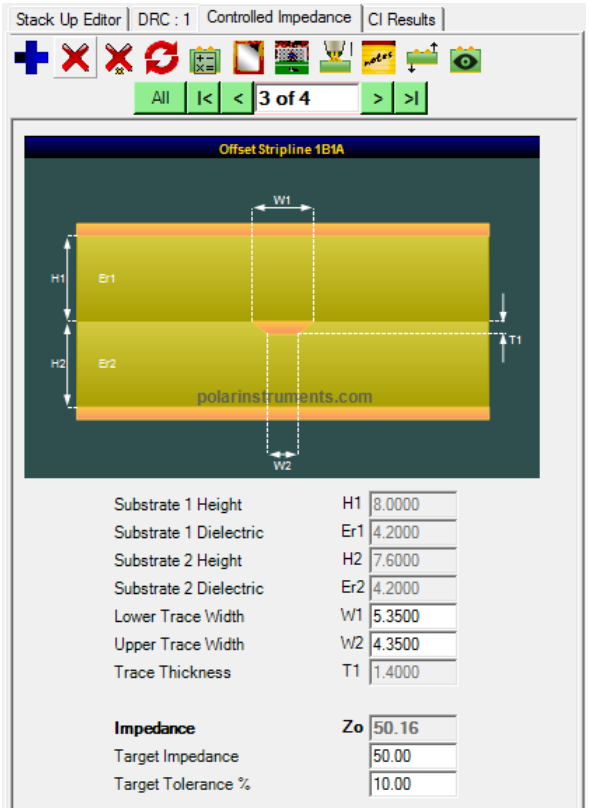


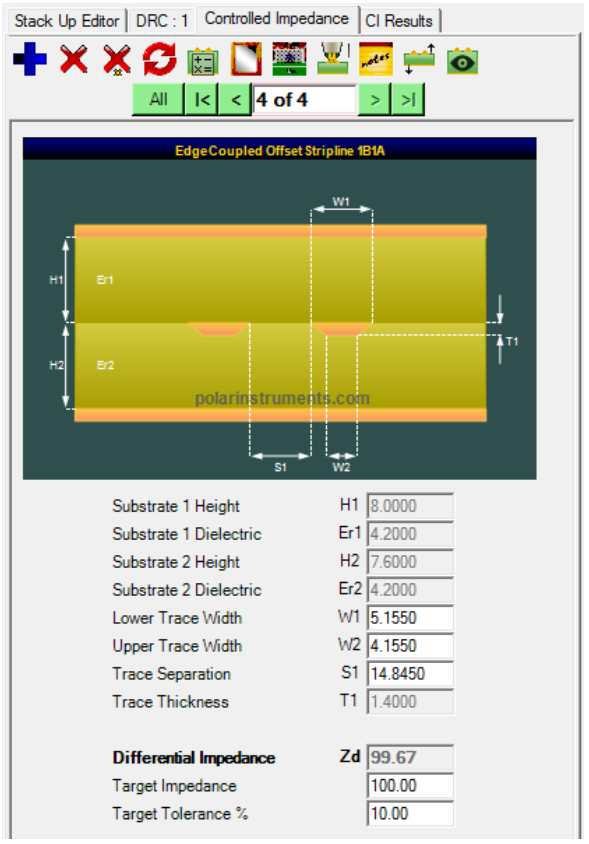
# Step 6: Adding impedance structures – layer 3

Follow the same process to add single-ended 50 ohms and differential 100 ohms structures to layer 3.



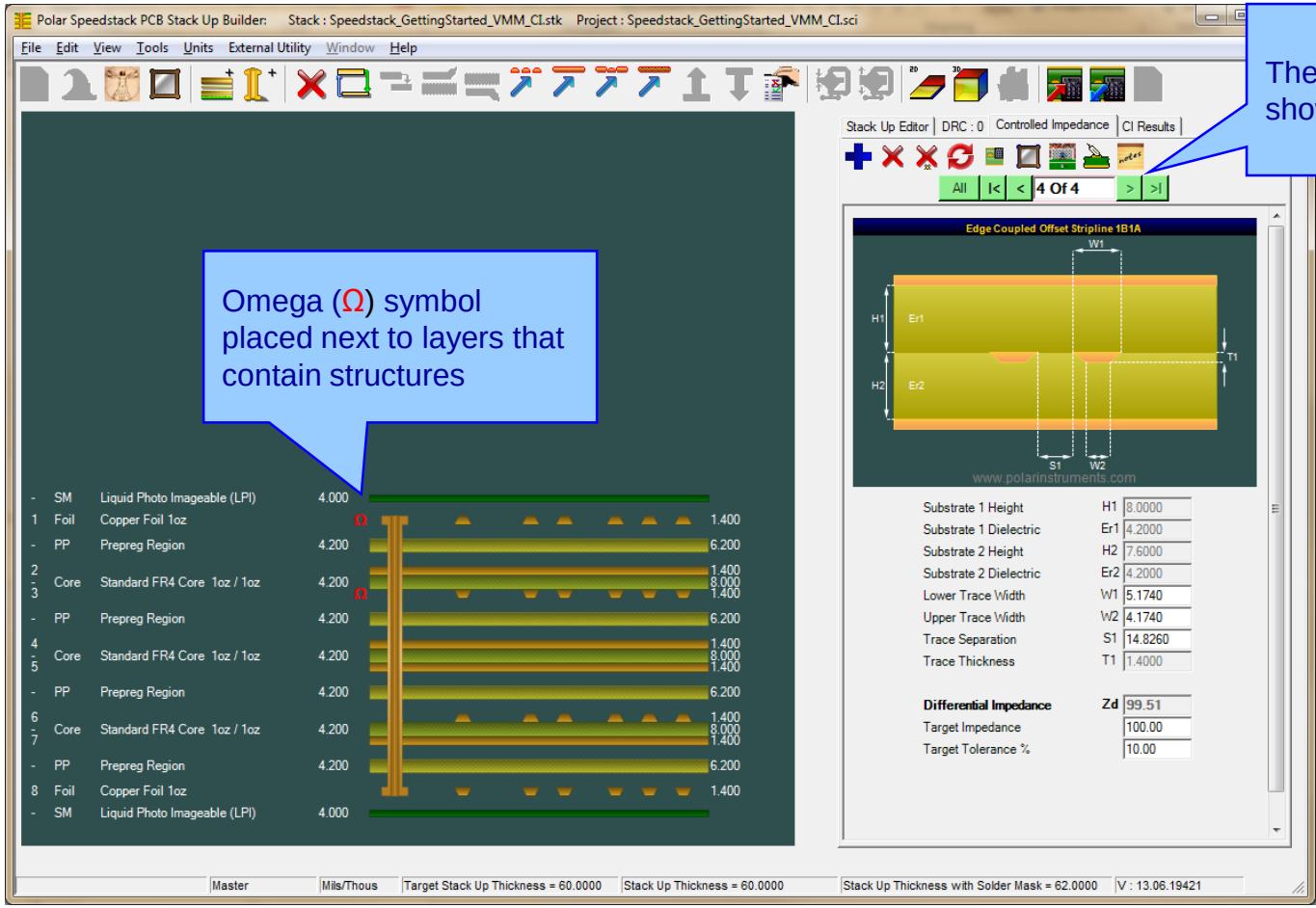





# Step 6: Adding impedance structures

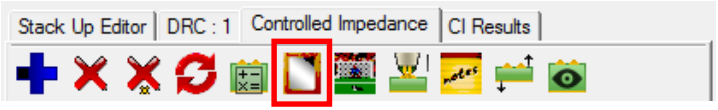
At this point we have four structures, two on layer 1, two on layer 3

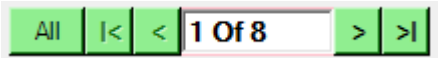


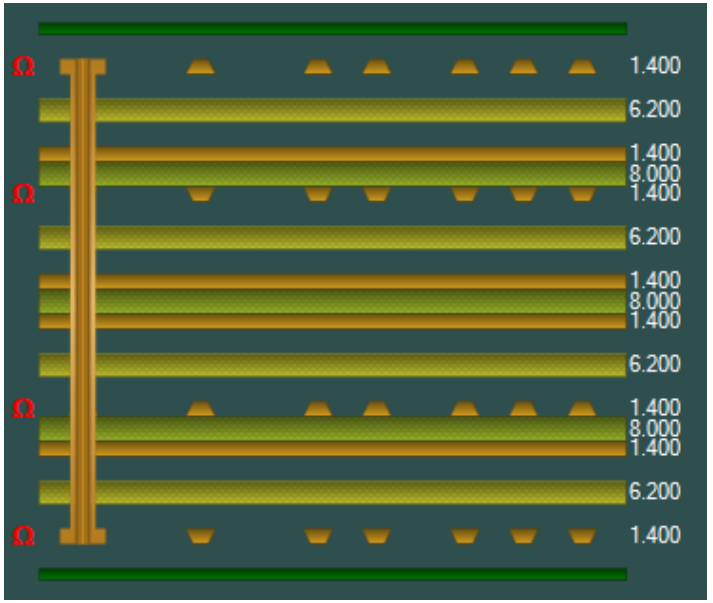
# Step 6: Adding impedance structures – mirroring structures

- As the stack is symmetrical, selecting ‘Mirror Structures’ will place four more structures on the lower half of the stack
- At this point the structure browse control will display eight structures in total
- The Ω symbol is now placed next to layers 1, 3, 6, 8

- This is an appropriate stage to save the stack up project as described in Step 3.

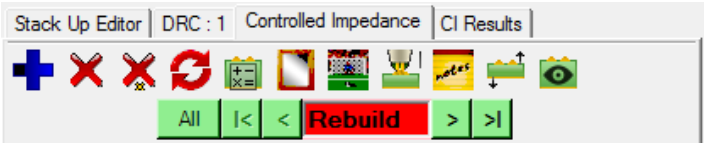


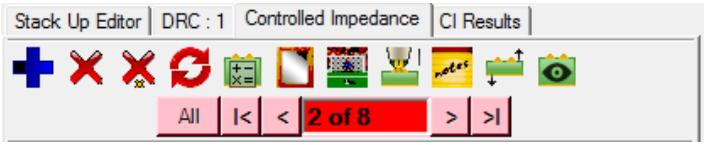



# Step 6: Impedance structures – other information

- If changes are made to the stack up that effect the impedance structures, a ‘Rebuild’ warning is displayed
- Click on the to rebuild the structures with the latest stack up information and re-calculate the impedance results
- If the structure browse control indicator displays red it denotes a structure impedance result outside tolerance. In this case structure 2 of 8. This usually can be resolved by using the Goal Seeking function to adjust trace widths / separation

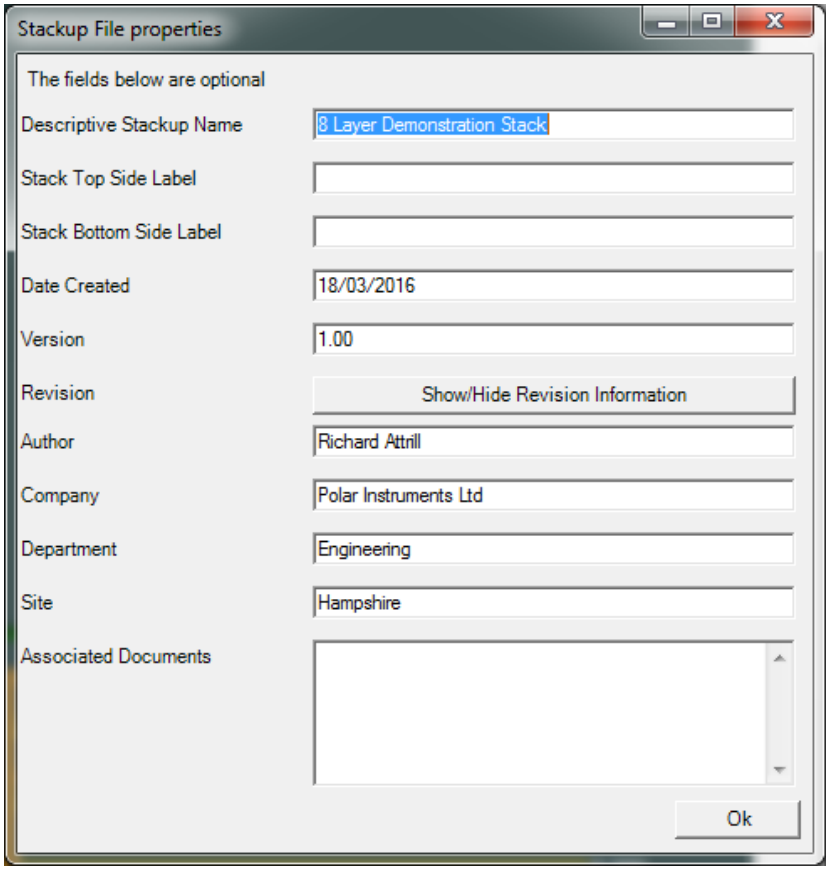


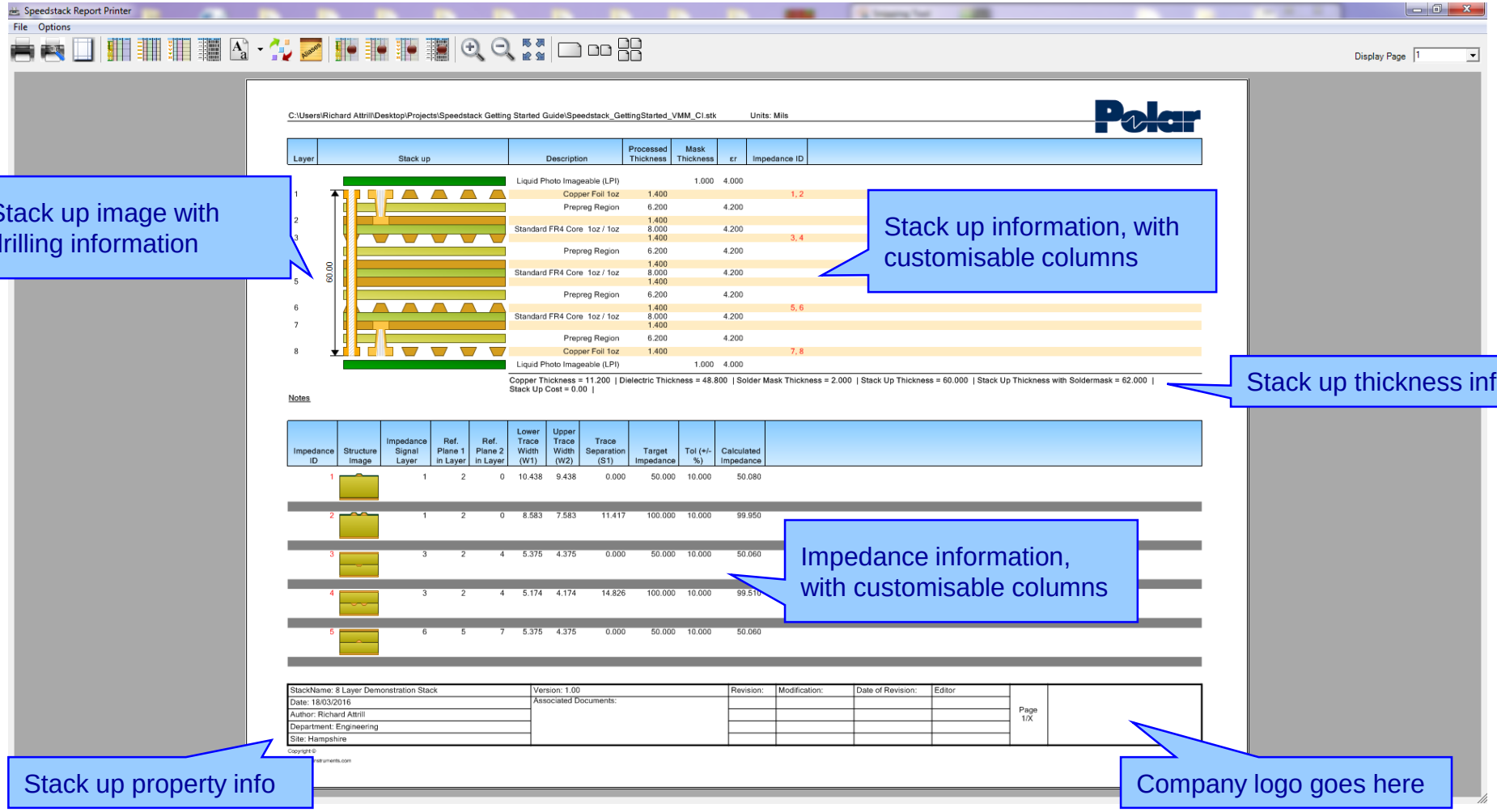
# Step 7: Printing a technical report

The 8 layer stack up with its drilling and impedance structure information is now complete, the final step is to generate a technical report

- Use the File | Properties option to add useful information about the stack up, such as descriptive stack up name, date created, author and company information
- Load the Technical Report option by using the File | Print | Technical Report

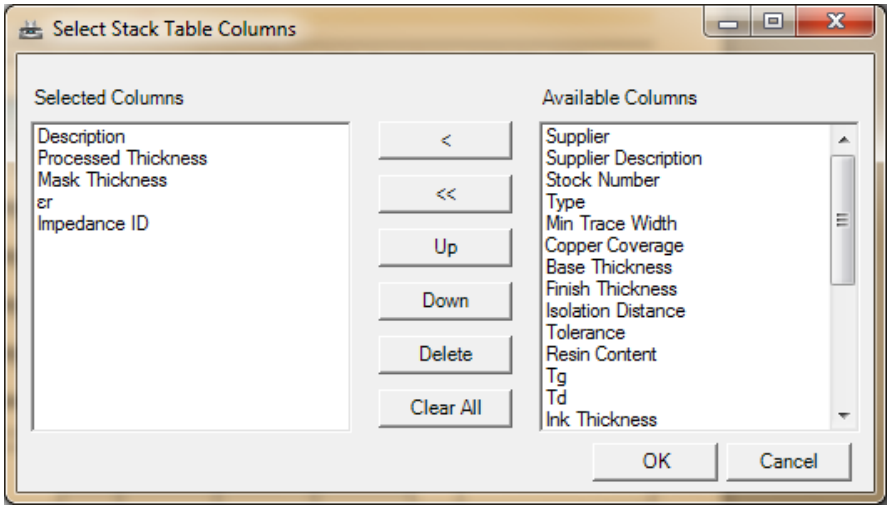


# Step 7: Printing a technical report (continued)

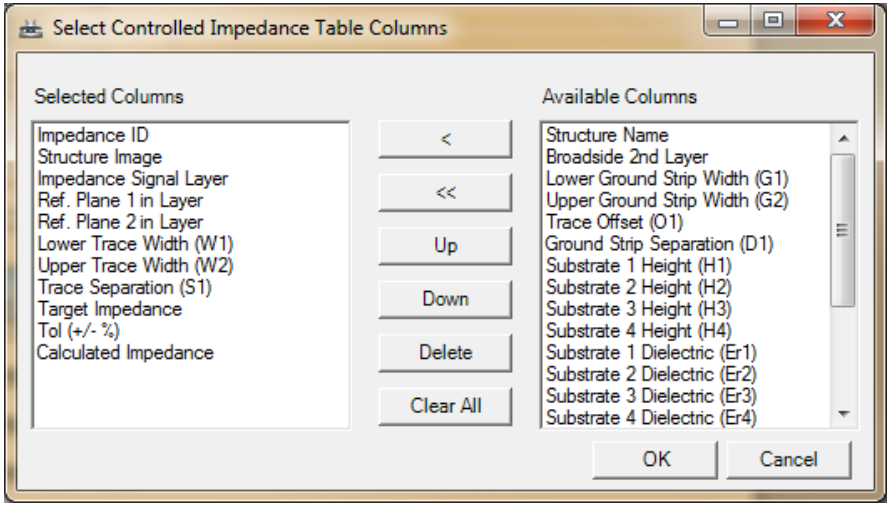


# Step 7: Printing a technical report (continued)

- Use the Select Stack Data Columns option to select the fields that you wish to print next to the stack up graphic




- Use the Select Impedance Data Columns option to configure the impedance structure table



# Step 7: Printing a technical report (continued) – sample output

C:\Users\Richard Attrill\Desktop\Projects\Speedstack Getting Started Guide\Speedstack_GettingStarted_VMM_CI.stk Units: Mils

| Layer | Stack up | Description | Processed Thickness | Mask Thickness | er | Impedance ID |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Liquid Photo Imageable (LPI) | | 1.000 | 4.000 | |
| 1 | | Copper Foil 1oz | 1.400 | | | 1, 2 |
| | | Prepreg Region | 6.200 | | 4.200 | |
| 2 | | | 1.400 | | | |
| | | Standard FR4 Core 1oz / 1oz | 8.000 | | 4.200 | |
| 3 | | | 1.400 | | | 3, 4 |
| | | Prepreg Region | 6.200 | | 4.200 | |
| 4 | | | 1.400 | | | |
| | | Standard FR4 Core 1oz / 1oz | 8.000 | | 4.200 | |
| 5 | | | 1.400 | | | |
| | | Prepreg Region | 6.200 | | 4.200 | |
| 6 | | | 1.400 | | | 5, 6 |
| | | Standard FR4 Core 1oz / 1oz | 8.000 | | 4.200 | |
| 7 | | | 1.400 | | | |
| | | Prepreg Region | 6.200 | | 4.200 | |
| 8 | | Copper Foil 1oz | 1.400 | | | 7, 8 |
| | | Liquid Photo Imageable (LPI) | | 1.000 | 4.000 | |

60.00

Copper Thickness = 11.200 | Dielectric Thickness = 48.800 | Solder Mask Thickness = 2.000 || Stack Up Thickness = 60.000 | Stack Up Thickness with Soldermask = 62.000 | Stack Up Cost = 0.00 |

Notes

| Impedance ID | Structure Image | Impedance Signal Layer | Ref. Plane 1 in Layer | Ref. Plane 2 in Layer | Lower Trace Width (W1) | Upper Trace Width (W2) | Trace Separation (S1) | Target Impedance | Tol (+/- %) | Calculated Impedance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | 1 | 2 | 0 | 10.438 | 9.438 | 0.000 | 50.000 | 10.000 | 50.080 |
| 2 | | 1 | 2 | 0 | 8.583 | 7.583 | 11.417 | 100.000 | 10.000 | 99.950 |
| 3 | | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5.375 | 4.375 | 0.000 | 50.000 | 10.000 | 50.060 |
| 4 | | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5.174 | 4.174 | 14.826 | 100.000 | 10.000 | 99.510 |
| 5 | | 6 | 5 | 7 | 5.375 | 4.375 | 0.000 | 50.000 | 10.000 | 50.060 |

| StackName: 8 Layer Demonstration Stack | Version: 1.00 | Revision: | Modification: | Date of Revision: | Editor | Page 1/2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Date: 18/03/2016 | Associated Documents: | | | | | |
| Author: Richard Attrill | | | | | | |
| Department: Engineering | | | | | | |
| Site: Hampshire | | | | | | |

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## Summary

Thanks for completing the Getting Started tutorial.

I hope it proved a useful introduction to the stack up creation process using Speedstack and that you enjoyed using it.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact your local Polar office at:
www.polarinstruments.com/distrib/international_offices.html

or contact us at polarcare@polarinstruments.com

Thanks again for using Speedstack.