



BASIC EAFORMS WYSIWYG BUILDER OPERATION

This document is a short introduction to the eaFormsBuilder (WYSIWYG) design tool.

The eaFormsBuilder is included in the designer versions of eaForms and is used to create eaForms, specifying the target element, adding controls and defining the look and feel of the target eaForm. In this introduction we illustrate the steps that a designer would take in the creation of a new eaForm.

TERMINOLOGY

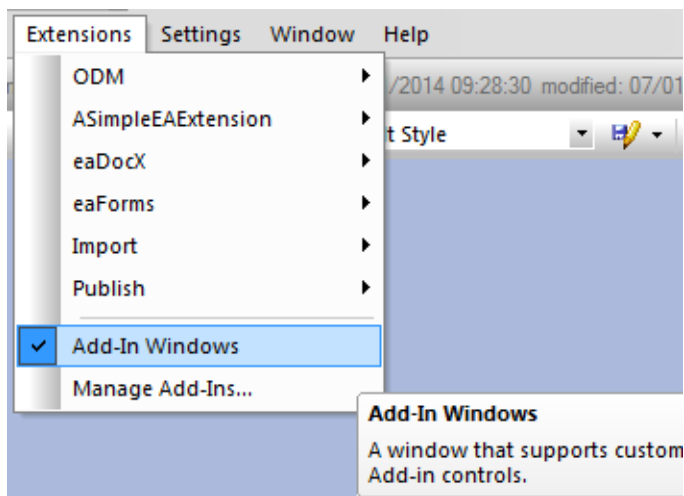
Here are few terms that are used in this document that we want to ensure you understand:

- Form – we use this term to mean the eaForm that you are creating. It will be a windows dialog that is presented to edit the selected element
- Control – is the term we use to describe the items that are placed on the Form to present / edit the element information – which may also included related information
- Dialog – is the windows form that is present by EA or eaForms to you during the design and into which you select / edit the required information.
- **Manage eaForms – design library** – is the eaForms AddIn window which lists the current eaForms. This window also provides action buttons

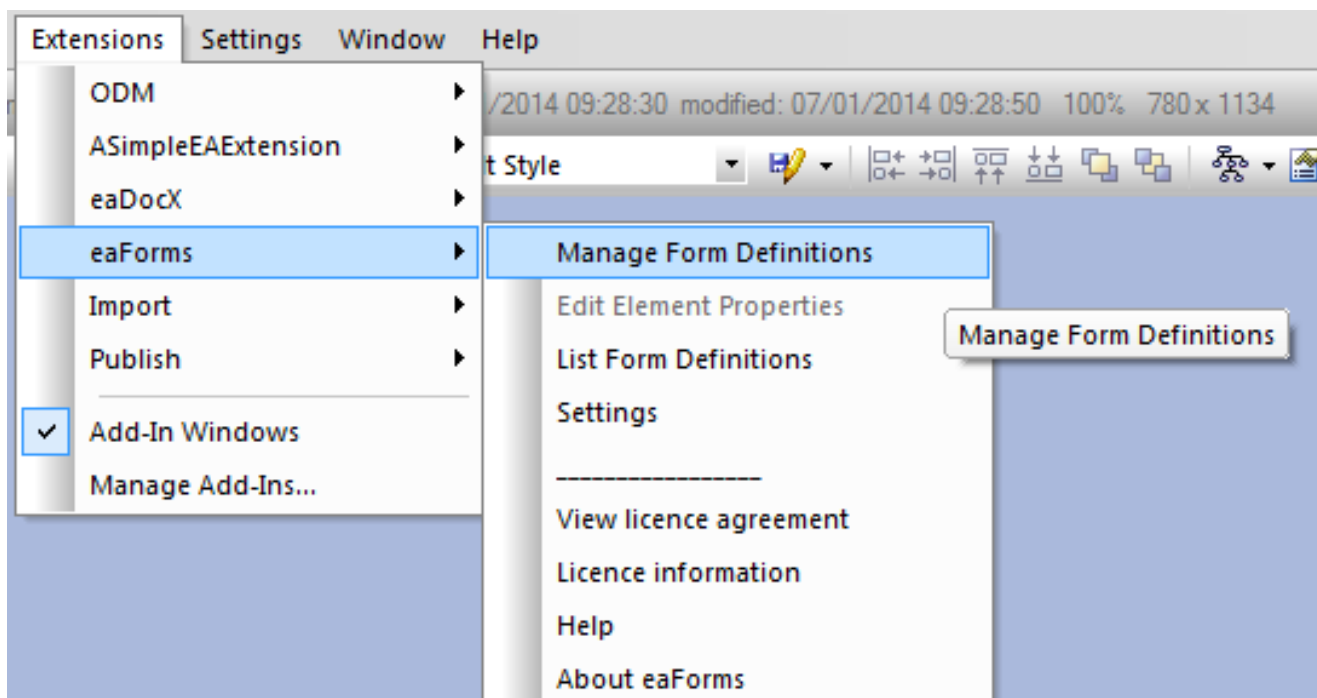
The following pages walk through steps of building an eaForm with the eaForms Builder.

BEFORE YOU START

Before starting to build the example, it is important to ensure that you have the **Manage eaForms – design library** window present. This is a standard EA AddIn window. To ensure that the AddIn windows are displayed go to the EA Extensions menu and ensure that the “Add-In Windows” item is checked as illustrated in the screenshot below.



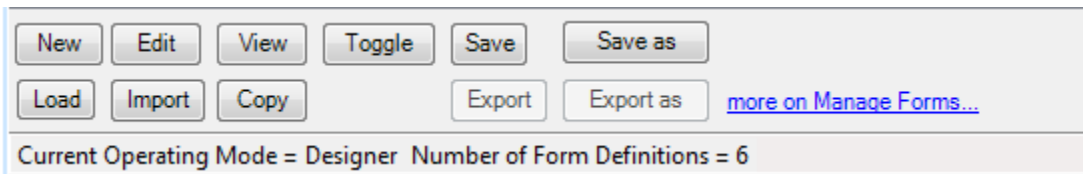
The **Manage eaForms – design library** tab should be available as one of the AddIn window tabs. If not present, go and select the window from the EA Extension menu – as illustrated in the screen shot below.



The other menu items are detailed in the product help – if you want more information select **Help** from the eaForms Menu.

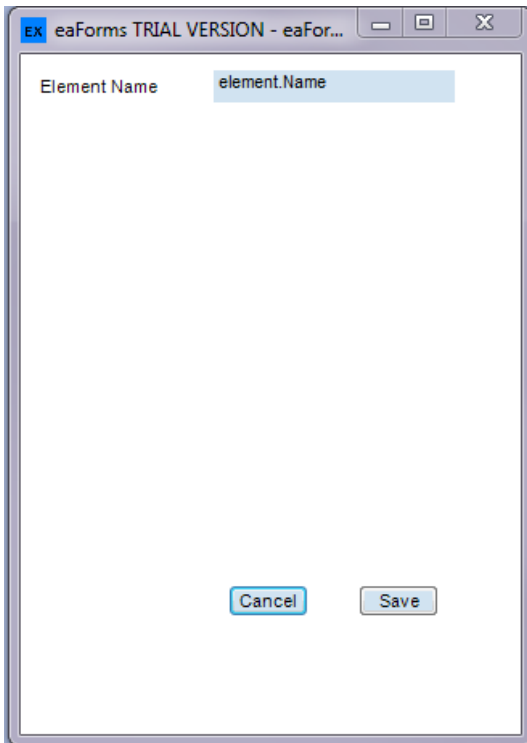
- Name – provide a meaningful and hopefully unique name for your eaForm
- MDG – as default this will be the “EA Core Elements” however if you want to create an eaForm for a specific MDG then select the required MDG (this will modify the available elements)
- Element Type – select the required type from the drop down.
- Stereotype – assuming that you are using the “EA Core Elements” - this can be left as <All> and this will mean that this eaForm will be displayed for any stereotype of the specified element. For an MDG this should not be modified.
- Notes – eaForms mandates that you provide a description and we feel it is good practice to at least jot down information related to the potential purpose of the form. This information is available later as part of the tooltip so can be used to inform users.

When satisfied that you have entered the desired information, press **Save** and you should see that your new form has been added to the list in the **Manage eaForms – design library** – you may also note that by default the entry is flagged as True in the Active Column.



THE BASIC EAFORM IS PRODUCED

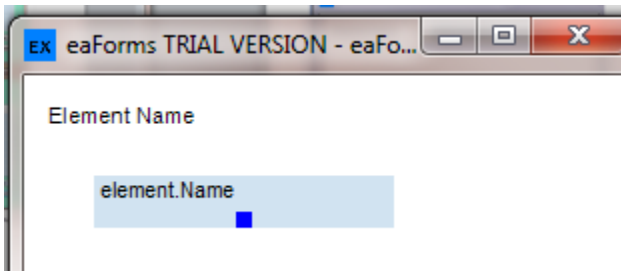
eaForms will now present you with the basic eaForm ready for editing



EDITING THE EAFORM

You can now use you mouse to edit the existing controls

- Resize the form
- manipulate the elements using the mouse - move, resize – controls



You will see “drag handles” when your mouse selects an edge or corner and you can use the left button to drag the relevant edge.

If you hover over the centre on the control you will get a “Cross cursor” which with the left-mouse button down, will enable you to move the control around the form.

Note: If you double click on a control or form, you will be presented with the control editor or form editor respectively – see the product help for more information. If this happens by mistake you can discard the form by pressing the “esc” key or the **cancel** button.

VIEWING THE RUN TIME FORM

At any time during the design you can view the run time form by pressing the **View** button in the **Manage eaForms – design library** window.

This will:

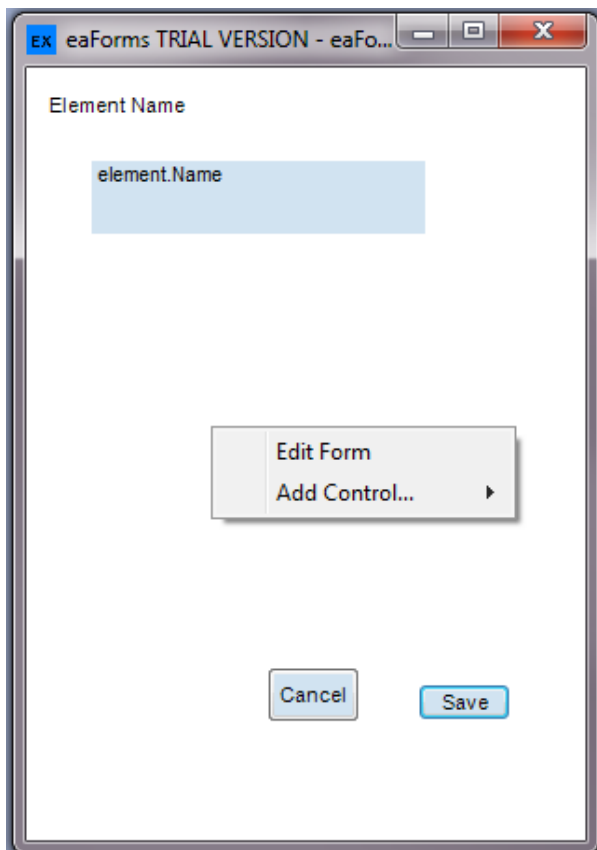
- Create a temporary element in the current EA package of an element type / stereotype to match the form being designer
- Generate a windows form using the eaForms runtime generator
- You can exercise the form however whe you close the form the temporary element will be deleted

Note: you must have read write permissions for the currently selected package for this to work.

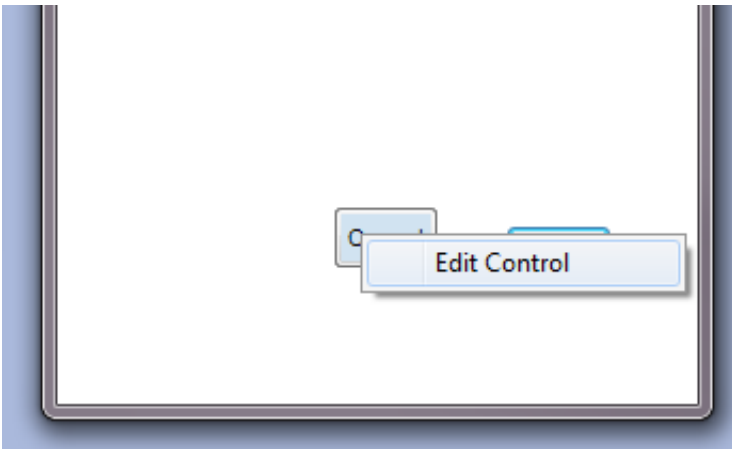
ADDING A CONTROL

Moving and sizing actions use the left mouse button, whilst the right mouse button is used for other actions.

If the cursor is positioned over the form (NOT a control) then you will be able to edit the form or Add a control.



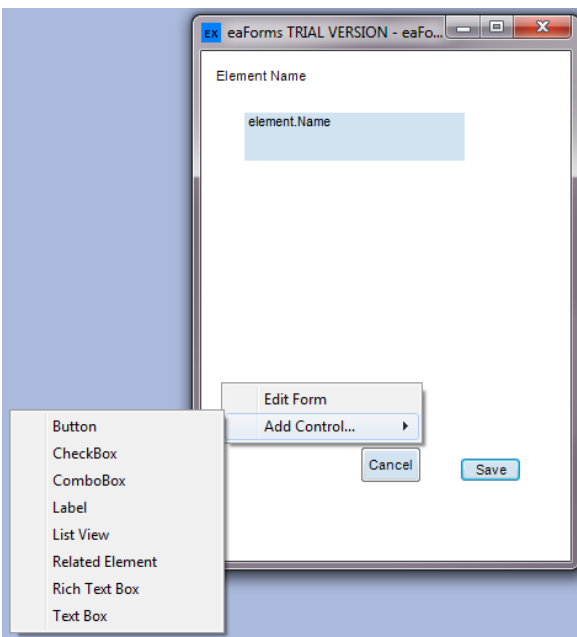
If you are positioned over a control then you can Edit the control.



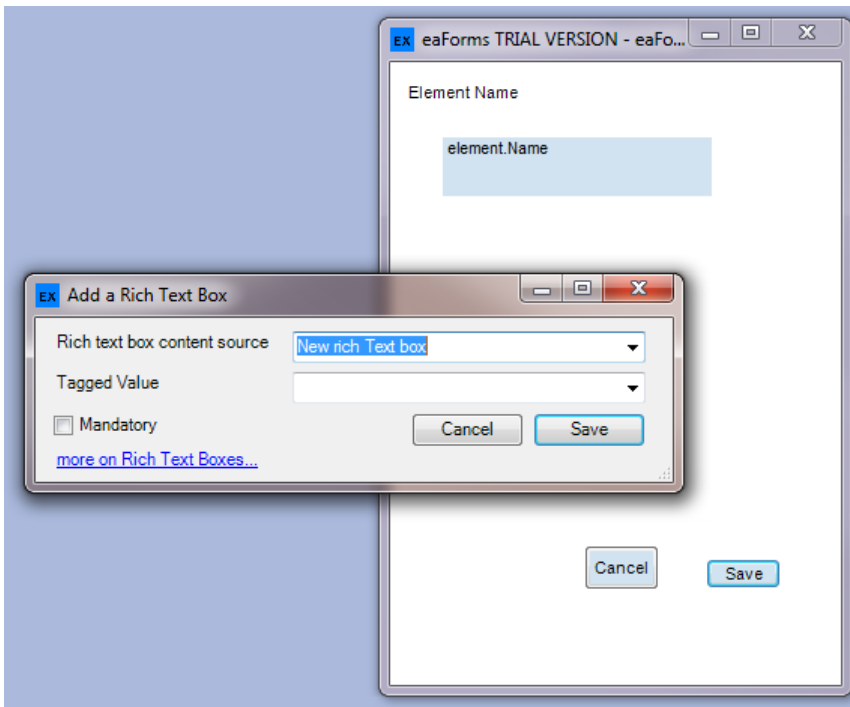
ADDING A CONTROL

So let us add a control – e.g. a Rich Text Box to display our element's notes.

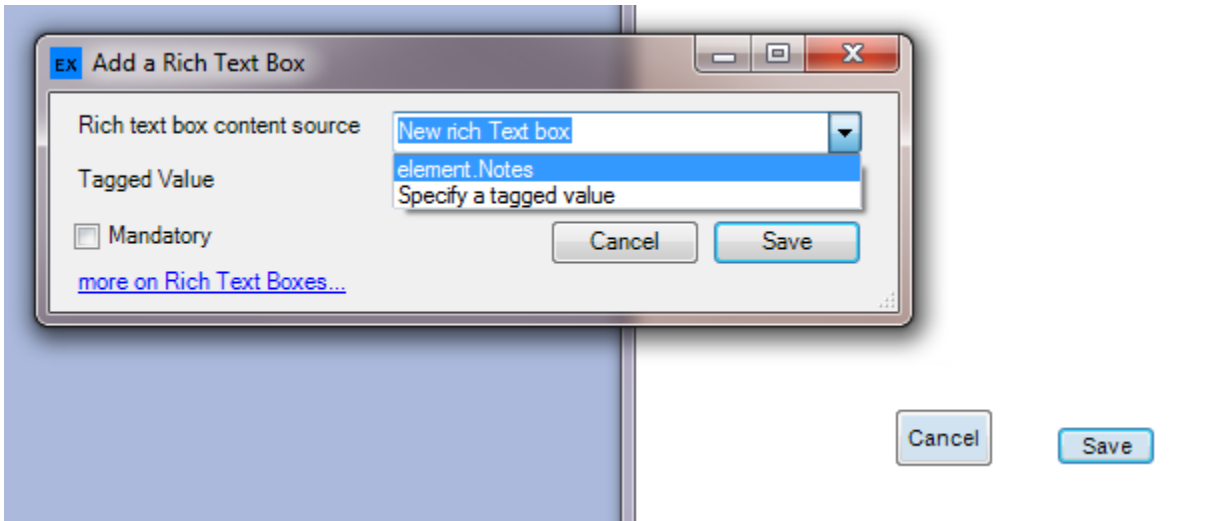
We place the cursor on the form and select with the right mouse button down, and select **Add Control**



We then select **Rich Text Box**, where you will be presented with the “Add a Rich Text Box” dialog, from which you can select the required data source from the drop down optins. This may be a element attribute or you can go to the bottom of the list and set select Tagged Value and use the 2nd drop down to select an existing tagged value or type a new taggedvalue.



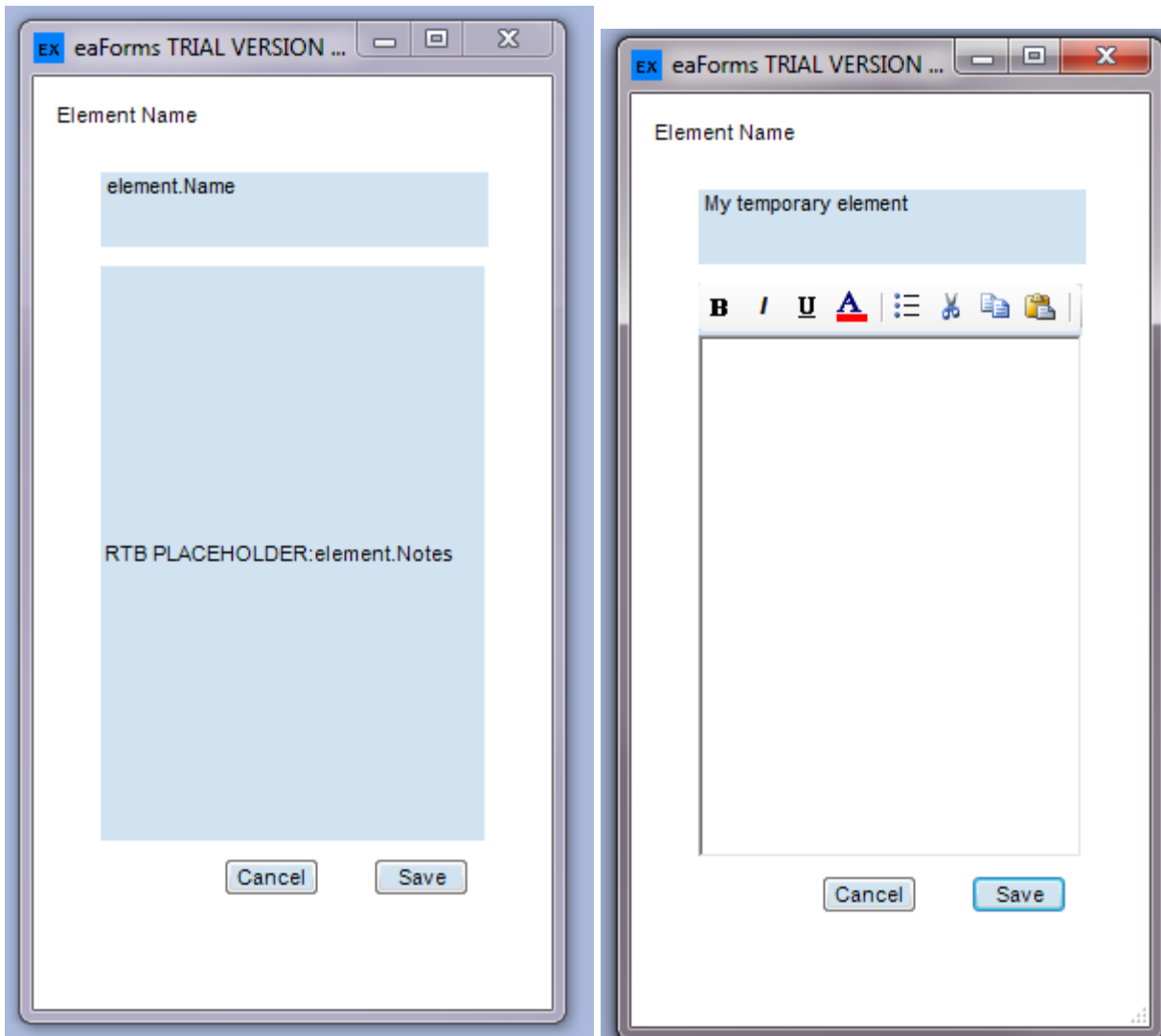
The screen shot below illustrates selecting the element notes.



Now, depending on where our cursor was when you pressed the mouse will determine where the rich text box has been placed and you could end up with a form that looks like the screen shot below (or completely different)



To make it more useful we can drag the controls around and resize them as needed. We have done this and this is illustrated in the left hand screen shot below.

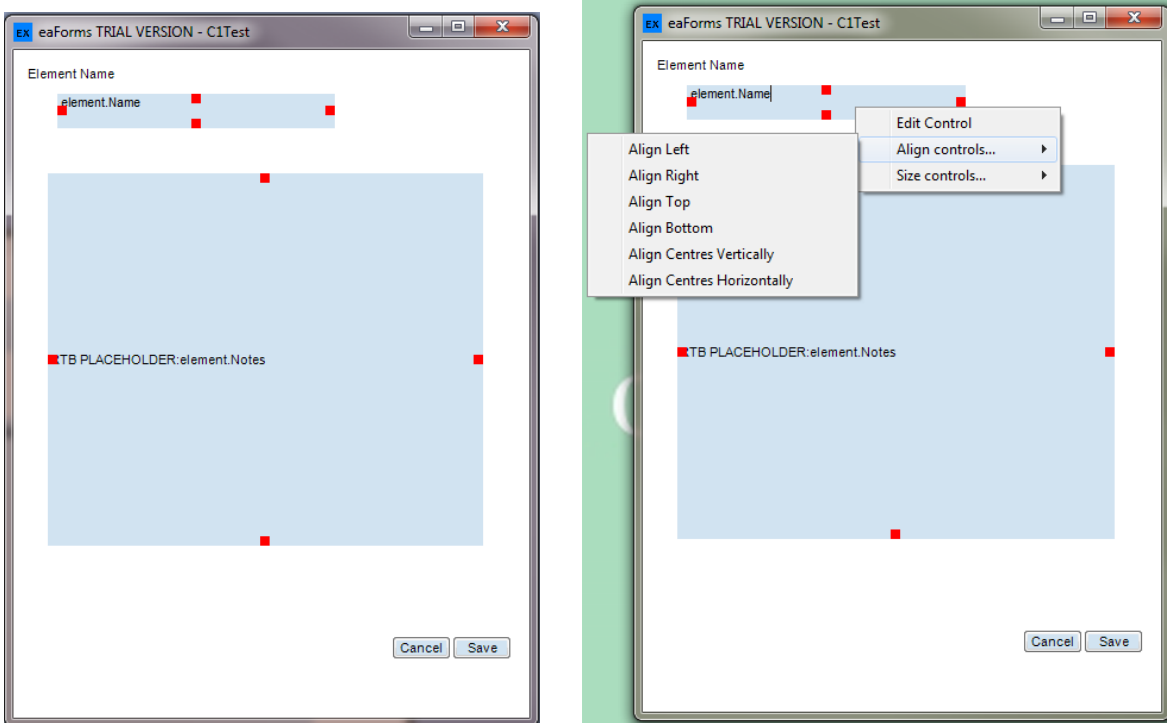


To view the form exactly as it will be presented at run time press **View** from the **Manage eaForms – design library** window. This will create a temporary element within EA and initiate an edit of that element – as shown in the right hand image above.

The main difference between the Builder and Run Time form is that the placeholder controls are replaced with real controls – i.e. for Listview, Rich Text Box and Related Elements.

You can continue to add controls, placing them as needed to create the eaForm you need in terms of content and layout. To refine the look and feel you can edit the form or control – see help file for details.

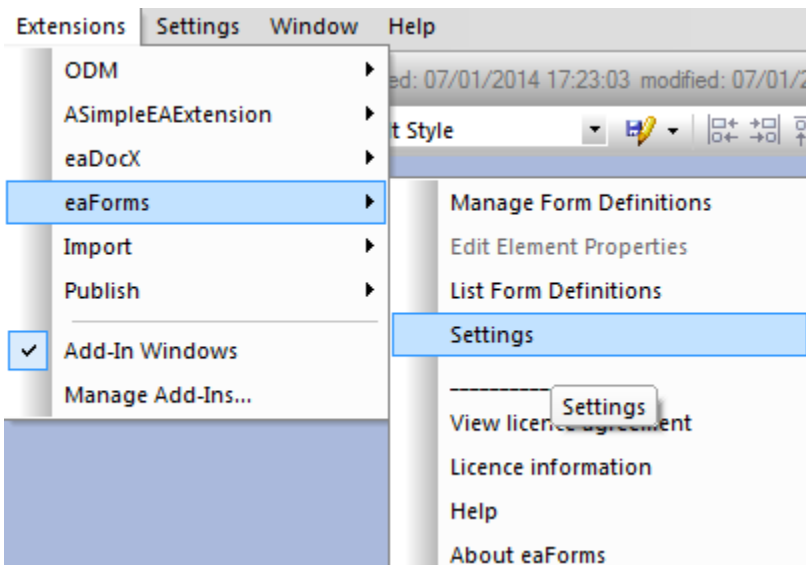
You can further explore the design capabilities for example if you select multiple items – by holding down the Ctrl key and left mouse button – you will see that selected controls have red drag handles.



Then if you press the right mouse button you are presented with menu options to Align or Size the selected controls.

DON'T FORGET TO SAVE YOUR FORM

Having created your form you will wish to save the form – go to the **Manage eaForms – design library** and press **Save**. By default this will save your file in the filename set in the “Extensions | eaForms | Settings” page



You can set the filenames for the Design Library – “Set Designer Form Definitions Filename” as well as a filename for Run Time definitions that will be provided to your users, but to understand more about this refer to the help file, where you can also find information about all the other settings you may use.

User Settings

Enable logging Autoload Form Definitions eaForms Intercept Enabled Intercept Composites

Enable tooltips Enable Generic form

Set Run Time Form Definitions Filename: C:\Users\adrian\Documents\Example_eaFormsForUsers1.XML

[more information User Settings...](#) Clear settings

Designer settings

Emulate RunTime Mode Auto save on edits Auto save on close

Only use enabled MDGs Limit to model Warn before form delete

Set Designer Form Definitions Filename: C:\Users\adrian\Documents\eaFormsDesignerFormDefinitionsLibrary.xml

Default Font: [Font: Name=Arial, Size=8.25, Units=3, GdiCharSet=0, GdiVerticalFont=Fals]

Default Form Background colour: FFFFFFFF

Default Form Foreground (text) Colour: 000000

Default Control Background Colour: F5F5F5

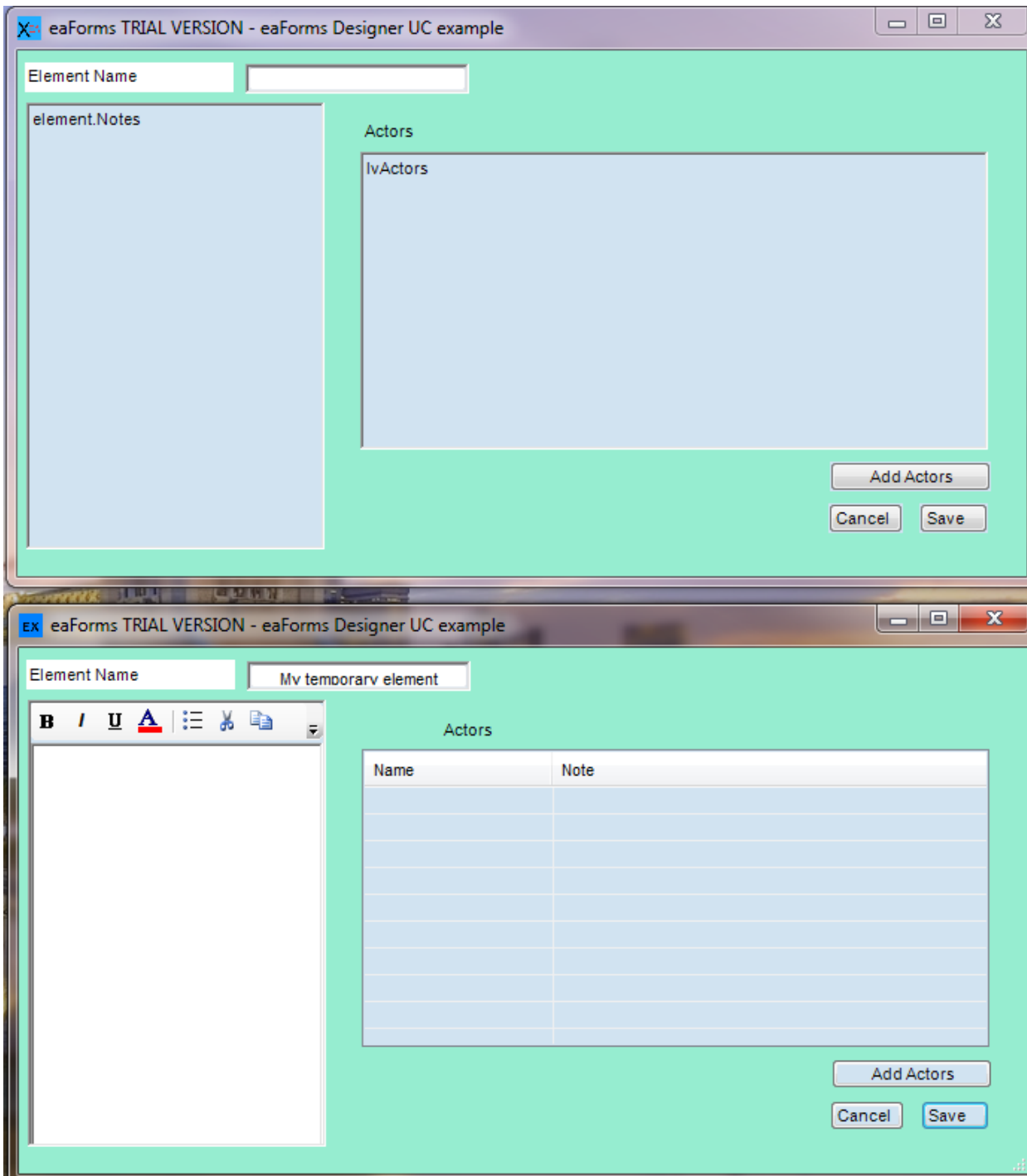
Default Control Foreground (Text) Colour: 000000

[more on Designer Settings...](#) Cancel Save

As a reminder:

- To edit the form – place the mouse on a blank area of the form and right click the mouse and select edit
- To edit a control – place the mouse on a control and right click the mouse – you can then edit the attributes and set exact locations to ensure alignments with other controls
- To add a control – place the mouse at the required location on the form, right click the mouse and select “Add...” for the required control and respond to dialog (same as used in existing versions)
- To select control – hold down the ctrl button and use the left mouse
- To align / size multiple items – only available when more than 1 item has been selected – select the right mouse button and chose your required option.

And finally, below is another example of the eaForms Builder (top) and run time version (bottom):

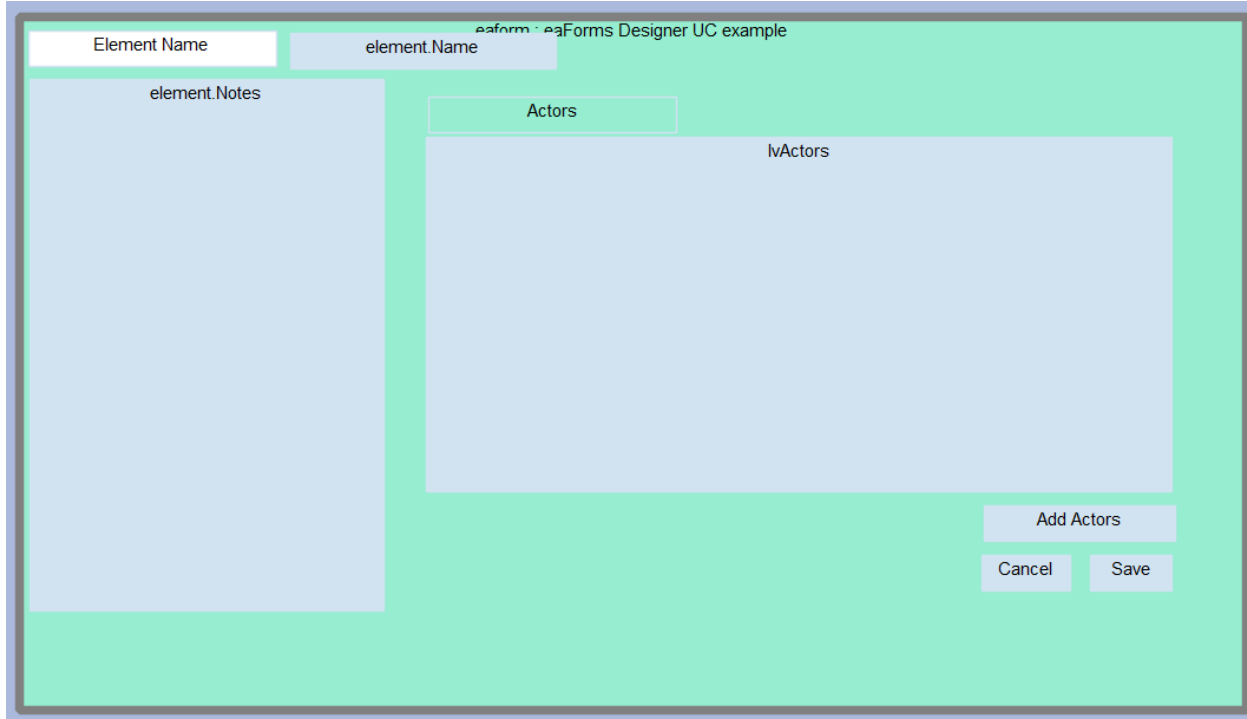


This eaForm is ready for use as would be designs done using the eaForms Diagram/MDG.

NOTES ON THE CURRENT VERSION

You can BUT DON'T HAVE TO inspect the eaForms diagram that is created automatically in parallel by the eaForms Builder by selecting the form in the **Manage eaForms – design library** window. Also note that changes to the eaForms diagram will update the form design (and Form Designer) when saved (this also happens when a form is viewed).

Below is an example of the eaForm Diagram for the above eaForms Builder example.



If you make changes to the eaForm EA diagram these will update the design when you press "Update" in the **Manage eaForms – design library** window.

CONTROL RESTRICTIONS

This information relates to the current development version of eaForms Bulder – there are restrictions that relating to the operation of eaForms

- The run time generation of some controls imposes minimum sizes e.g. Related Element - at present the form designer is not checking that the control fully meets these requirements
- Although may have selected autosize for a control the representation on the form design may not exactly represent sizes as the data is not known at design time
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KNOWN ISSUES

This information relates to the current development version of eaForms Bulder – there are several known issues with the eaForms Designer, where possible we will attempt to address them soon.

- Some controls (List View, Rich Text Box, Related Element control) are represented by placeholders - we are exploring the best method to present these are real controls whilst providing the functionality needed at design time
- Text Box edge handle detection on right hand and bottom edge detection do not always work as we would expect.
Workaround - use other edges to size and move as appropriate
- Edit Control for Combox Box does not provide option to edit all attributes
- Changing check box values on Form Builder does not change the default value - need to edit control
- We have observed some instances when the selection handles sometimes become temporarily invisible
- No element boundary highlights are provided for the eaFormsBuilder, if required a workaround is to change the form background colour to ensure a contrast until the form is design and then revert to the required color before finishing