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## **Guidance Note on Address Formatting for the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) notification template**

Over recent months the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) team have received a number of queries regarding how to format addresses in the notification template. In response to this we have produced a new, expanded guidance document. This document provides updated guidance for formatting address data for the purpose of notifying measures for the ECO scheme. It replaces any previous guidance published on address formatting. The instructions set out in this document should be followed to minimise any potential errors encountered during the address validation process.

There are a number of rules that apply when formatting address level data in the ECO notification template. This document provides guidance based on these rules. It also explains how to interpret addresses based on different address structures and how addresses should be formatted for the notification of completed actions to Ofgem for ECO.

The document provides:

1. Background information on PAF Address Structures
2. ECO Address Data Requirements
3. ECO Address Formatting Instructions
4. Address Examples

This document should be used in conjunction with the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO): Guidance for Suppliers<sup>1</sup> and Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) Notification Data Dictionary<sup>2</sup>.

Additional Notes:

- These rules apply to the majority of address structures but are not guaranteed to resolve all queries.
- Rules may need to be applied in combinations depending on the exact address format required.
- These requirements may require updating in line with any future changes to the ECO scheme.
- Suppliers should refer to the Royal Mail Postcode Address File (PAF) when using this guidance document.

For assistance and address related queries please contact the ECO Operational Team: [eco@ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:eco@ofgem.gov.uk)

<sup>1</sup><https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/75775/energycompaniesobligationecoguidanceforsuppliers-version11.pdf>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/energy-companies-obligation-eco/information-suppliers>

# 1. Background: PAF Address Structures

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## Chapter Summary

To validate addresses, Ofgem compares the data provided by suppliers to the Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF) records. This requires data to be mapped to the most appropriate element of the different PAF structures. The following information provides the background to address validation and references are further explained in the examples contained in this document.

- 1.1. PAF Addresses have a number of different address elements. No one single address has all elements populated for it. The two compulsory elements are the Post Town and the Postcode.
- 1.2. An address is composed of four basic elements:
  1. **Postcode** – All addresses in a postcode have the same locality.
  2. **Locality** – This is a geographical area. The post town will always be present but so may additional elements such as Dependent Locality or Double Dependent Locality which further define the geographic area when required.
  3. **Thoroughfare** – This is a main road or passageway. When the locality information does not identify the location of an address there will be Thoroughfare information available. When a Thoroughfare is present there is always street level data available for the address.
  4. **Premises** – This refers to a building and the accompanying land. These elements ensure a single, unique, delivery point can be defined for a property.
- 1.3. For the purpose of the ECO scheme the following PAF address elements are to be considered:

Element	Sub-set Address Element
Premises	Sub Building
	Building Name
	Building Number
Thoroughfare	Dependant Thoroughfare
	Thoroughfare
Locality	Double Dependant Locality
	Dependant Locality
	Post Town
Postcode	Postcode

## Premises Elements

1.4. The key **residential** premises elements are:

1. Sub Building Name
2. Building Name
3. Building Number

1.5. Combinations of these elements may be present in an address, but a Sub Building Name will not be present on its own. When a Sub Building is present there will always be a Building Name or Building Number data present

## Thoroughfare Elements

1.6. Thoroughfare elements can contain both Thoroughfares and Dependant Thoroughfares.

1.7. A Dependent Thoroughfare can be comprised of both a Dependant Thoroughfare Name and a Dependent Thoroughfare Descriptor.

1.8. Likewise, Thoroughfares can be comprised of Thoroughfare Names and Thoroughfare Descriptors.

1.9. For each Postcode there should only be one Thoroughfare.

1.10. A Dependent Thoroughfare cannot be present on its own and when present there will always be Thoroughfare information available.

1.11. A Thoroughfare isn't always required and sometimes the premises and/or Locality (e.g. post town) information is sufficient to identify the location of an address.

## Locality Elements

1.12. A geographical area (locality) is comprised of:

1. Double Dependant Locality (this element isn't required for the purposes of ECO)
2. Dependant Locality (this element isn't required for the purposes of ECO)
3. Post Town
4. County (this element isn't required for the purposes of ECO)

1.13. There is only one Locality per Postcode (i.e. all addresses in a Postcode have the same Locality).

1.14. A Double Dependant Locality can only be present when a Dependant Locality is present.

- 1.15. A Post Town is mandatory for the delivery point of an address. A Post Town will always be present in every address (sometimes as the only locality element in the PAF structure).

## 2. ECO Address Data Requirements

### Chapter Summary

Address data requirements have been set out for the purpose of ECO. This section further details how the ECO address formats relate to different PAF address structures.

### Data Dictionary

- 2.1. When notifying Ofgem of qualifying actions for ECO, suppliers must provide Ofgem with the address at which the measure has been installed.
- 2.2. To identify an address, Ofgem require suppliers to provide:
  1. Flat Name/Number
  2. Building Number
  3. Building Name
  4. Street Name
  5. Town
  6. Postcode
- 2.3. Suppliers are instructed to refer to the ECO Notification Data Dictionary for requirements on providing this information.

### Data Mapping

- 2.4. The key PAF data fields utilised for ECO, and how they relate to the ECO requirements are:

PAF Field		Notification Dictionary	Data
[PAF_Postcode]	→	PostCode	
[PAF_Posttown]	→	Town	
[PAF_DependantThoroughfareDescriptor]	→	Building Name *	
[PAF_BuildingNumber]	→	Building Number	
[PAF_BuildingName]	→	Building Name *	
[PAF_SubBuilding]	→	Flat Name/Number	
[PAF_ThoroughfareDescriptor]	→	Street	

\* For some addresses the Building Name requires a combination of address data.

## 3. ECO Address Formatting Instructions

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### Chapter Summary

There are a number of rules that identify how these relationships work. This section outlines the rules for populating the ECO notification template with addresses of different structures. It explains how the different PAF fields should be utilised to ensure addresses are uniquely identified in the ECO Register.

### Generic Rules

#### 2.5. Rule 1 – Post Code

A Postcode is always required for an address. This should be the Postcode corresponding to the Postcode in PAF - [PAF\_Postcode].

#### 2.6. Rule 2 – Post Town

A Town is always required for an address. This should be the Post Town corresponding to Post Town in PAF - [PAF\_Posttown].

#### 2.7. Rule 3 – Street

- i. When there are Thoroughfare details in PAF, Suppliers should notify these as the 'Street' attribute for ECO.
- ii. In PAF, a Thoroughfare may be made up of Thoroughfare Name and Thoroughfare Descriptor elements. When both are present these should be concatenated and notified as the Street for ECO.

#### 2.8. Rule 4 – Premises

A Building Name or Building Number is always required. Residential addresses should always contain one or both of these.

#### 2.9. Rule 5 – Formatting

- i. Address information should not be abbreviated from how it appears in PAF (e.g. "Street" should not be shortened to "St", "Road" to "Rd", "Terrace" to "Tr" etc.)
- ii. Address information should be formatted as such and should not contain alternative formats (For example, Scottish tenement (e.g. 1-2 or 1/2))

details may be reformatted as date formats (i.e. 01-Feb) if the data is manipulated using software such as Microsoft Excel).

- iii. Address data needs to be exact and recorded as per the corresponding PAF data. Incorrectly spelt or misreported addresses will not be accepted. Examples:
  - a. Different references to flats (e.g. Flat 1/Flat A/Ground Floor Flat etc.)
  - b. Correct use of special characters such as apostrophes, ampersands, hyphens, brackets and punctuation (e.g. St. Ives) etc.

### Typical Residential Addresses

#### 2.10. Rule 6 – Building Numbers

When a building number appears as the Building Number element in PAF, suppliers should notify the number as the Building Number for ECO.

#### 2.11. Rule 7 – Building Names

- i. When a building name appears as the Building Name element in PAF, suppliers should notify the name as Building Name for ECO.
- ii. For addresses with numerical ranges (e.g. 100-110) in the Building Name element in PAF, suppliers should notify the full number range as the 'Building Name' for ECO (including any special characters such as hyphens).
- iii. If an address has a building name or number that includes non-numerical characters (e.g. 64A) in the Building Name element in PAF, suppliers should notify this as the Building Name for ECO.
- iv. When addresses contain both building numbers and building names in the Building Name element in PAF, suppliers should notify this as the Building Name for ECO.

## 2.12. **Rule 8 – Sub Building Names**

- i. For addresses with Sub Building Name elements in PAF, suppliers should notify the Sub Building Name as the 'Flat Name/Number' for ECO.
- ii. Sub Building Name (e.g. Flat Name/ Number) cannot be present on its own and will always require a Building Name or Building Number data to be present (see **Rule 4 - Premises**).
- iii. Tenement details (e.g. 1-2 or 1/2) should be entered as the Building Name for ECO except when the tenement is within a building that has a name appearing in the Building Name element in PAF (see rule 6 and 7 (i)).

## **Dependant Thoroughfares**

### 2.13. **Rule 9 – Address with Dependant Thoroughfares**

- i. For addresses with Building Names and Dependent Thoroughfares, suppliers should concatenate and notify the Building Name and Dependant Thoroughfare as the Building Name for ECO.
- ii. For addresses with Dependent Thoroughfares but no Building Names, suppliers should notify the Dependant Thoroughfare as the Building Name for ECO.

## **Dependant Localities**

### 2.14. **Rule 10 – Address with Dependant Localities**

Post Town is the only Locality information required for ECO. Suppliers should **not** notify any Dependant Localities for addresses. If there is no Thoroughfare data corresponding to the street, suppliers should notify just the Building Name or Number, Town and Postcode for ECO.



## Appendix 1 – Address Examples

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### 1. Introduction

This appendix contains examples of how addresses<sup>3</sup> of the different structure types should be notified using the ECO notification template. **Rules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are generic and apply across all examples.**

### Thoroughfare

### 2. Rule 3 (ii) – Thoroughfare

Thoroughfare details in PAF should be notified as the 'Street' attribute for ECO.

PAF Structure	Example
BUILDING NAME	VICTORIA HOUSE
THOROUGHFARE	HIGH STREET
POST TOWN	PORTSMOUTH
POSTCODE	PO1 1AF

#### **ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
		VICTORIA HOUSE	HIGH STREET	PORTSMOUTH	PO1 1AF

### 3. Rule 3 (ii) – Address with Thoroughfare Name and Descriptor

Thoroughfares are made up of Thoroughfare Names and Thoroughfare Descriptors. The Thoroughfare Name refers to the first part of the text (e.g. 'High') and the Thoroughfare Descriptor refers to the last part of the text (e.g. 'Street'). A Thoroughfare Descriptor should never be present on its own. These fields should be concatenated to form a Thoroughfare and notified as the 'Street' for ECO.

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<sup>3</sup> Note that the addresses used in this Appendix are all fictional. They have been used for example purposes only.

PAF Structure	Example
BUILDING NUMBER	16
THOROUGHFARE NAME	ANGELICA
THOROUGHFARE DESCRIPTOR	WAY
POST TOWN	EMSWORTH
POSTCODE	NR25 7HG

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
	16		ANGELICA WAY	EMSWORTH	NR25 7HG

**Typical Residential Addresses****4. Rule 6 – Typical Residential Address with Building Number**

A typical residential address structure consists of Building Numbers and/or Building Names together with Thoroughfare details. Numbers appearing in the PAF Building Number element should be provided in the Building Number column for ECO.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example
BUILDING NUMBER	16
THOROUGHFARE	VIXEN ROAD
POST TOWN	BRADOCK
POSTCODE	KT6 5BT

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
	16		VIXEN ROAD	BRADOCK	KT6 5BT

**5. Rule 7 – Typical Residential Address with Building Name**

A typical residential address structure consists of Building Numbers and/or Building Names together with Thoroughfare details. Details appearing in the PAF Building Name element should be provided in the Building Name column for ECO.

**6. Rule 7 (i) – Building Name**

PAF Structure	Fictional Example 1	Fictional Example 2
BUILDING NAME	TY'R HAUL	(HYNES)
THOROUGHFARE	VIXEN ROAD	CROMPTON ROAD
POST TOWN	BRADOCK	BRADLEY HEATH
POSTCODE	KT6 5BT	S64 5BB

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
		TY'R HAUL	VIXEN ROAD	BRADOCK	KT6 5BT
		(HYNES)	CROMPTON ROAD	BRADLEY HEATH	S64 5BB

**7. Rule 7 (ii) – Address with a Range in the Building Name Field**

Sometimes addresses contain a range in the Building Name. When a range is present these should be notified for ECO as the Building Name.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example
SUB BUILDING NAME	CARETAKERS FLAT
BUILDING NAME	110-114
TOROUGHFARE	HIGH STREET WEST
POST TOWN	BRISTOL
POSTCODE	BS1 2AW

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
CARETAKERS FLAT		110-114	HIGH STREET WEST	BRISTOL	BS1 2AW

**8. Rule 7 (iii) – Building Numbers with non-numeric entries**

For some addresses the premises information consists of non-numerical characters and are recorded in PAF as Building Names. For ECO these should be notified as the Building Name.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example
BUILDING NAME	64A
THOROUGHFARE	RUBY STREET
POST TOWN	NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
POSTCODE	NE5 2FE

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
		64A	RUBY STREET	NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	NE5 2FE

**9. Rule 7 (iv) – Building Names with numbers and names**

For some addresses in PAF the Building Name contains both a building number and the name of a building. For ECO these should be notified as the Building Name.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example
BUILDING NAME	61 ROBINSONS COURT
THOROUGHFARE	HONING ROAD
POST TOWN	FAREHAM
POSTCODE	PO14 1UX

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
		61 ROBINSONS COURT	HONING ROAD	FAREHAM	PO14 1UX

**Addresses with Sub Buildings****10. Rule 8 (i) – Sub Building Names**

When an address contains a Sub Building Name, it should be notified as the Flat Name/Number for ECO

PAF Structure	Fictional Example
SUB BUILDING NAME	FLAT 20
BUILDING NAME	VICTORIA HOUSE
BUILDING NUMBER	15
THOROUGHFARE	THE STREET
POST TOWN	CHRISTCHURCH
POSTCODE	BH23 6AA

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
FLAT 20	15	VICTORIA HOUSE	THE STREET	CHRISTCHURCH	BH23 6AA

**11. Rule 8 (ii) – Sub Building Names and Premises**

A Sub Building Name will never be present on its own and addresses with Sub Building Names will always have either a Building Name and/or Building Number also. When present in an address these should always be provided.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example 1	Fictional Example 2
SUB BUILDING NAME	(SMITH)	UPPER COACH HOUSE
BUILDING NUMBER		10
BUILDING NAME	ROSE COTTAGE	
THOROUGHFARE	PACKHOUSE LANE	OAK AVENUE
POST TOWN	BIRMINGHAM	ASHFORD
POSTCODE	B39 0DH	TN27 8BT

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
(SMITH)		ROSE COTTAGE	PACKHOUSE LANE	BIRMINGHAM	B39 0DH
UPPER COACH HOUSE	10		OAK AVENUE	ASHFORD	TN27 8BT

**12. Rule 8 (iii) - Tenements**

Some addresses have premises identified with tenement details (e.g. 1/1 or 1-2). Tenement details should be entered as the Building Name for ECO except when the tenement is within a Building (Name or Number), then it should be provided as the Flat Name/Number for ECO.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example 1	Fictional Example 2
SUB BUILDING NAME		11/2
BUILDING NUMBER	2/3	1729
THOROUGHFARE	HOOD COURT	HOOD COURT
POST TOWN	GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY	GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY
POSTCODE	PH26 3NU	PH26 3NU

**ECO Format:**

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
		2/3	HOOD COURT	GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY	PH26 3NU
11/2	1729		HOOD COURT	GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY	PH26 3NU

## Dependent Thoroughfare

### 13. Rule 9 (i) – Address with Dependent Thoroughfare and Building Name

When a Dependent Thoroughfare is present there will always be thoroughfare information also. The thoroughfare (name and/or descriptor) identifies the 'Street' whilst the Dependant Thoroughfare should be concatenated with the Building Name and notified as the 'Building Name' for ECO.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example
BUILDING NAME	1A
DEPENDANT THOROUGHFARE	SEASTONE COURT
THOROUGHFARE	STATION ROAD
POST TOWN	HOLT
POST CODE	NR25 7HG

#### ECO Format:

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
		1A SEASTONE COURT	STATION ROAD	HOLT	NR25 7HG

### 14. Rule 9 (ii) – Address with Dependent Thoroughfare

When a Dependent Thoroughfare is present there will always be thoroughfare information also. The thoroughfare (name and/or descriptor) identifies the 'Street' whilst the Dependant Thoroughfare should be notified as the 'Building Name' for ECO.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example
BUILDING NUMBER	176
DEPENDANT THOROUGHFARE	CHARLES SQUARE
THOROUGHFARE	BUTLER STREET
POST TOWN	HAWICK
POST CODE	TD9 8SB

#### ECO Format:

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
	176	CHARLES SQUARE	BUTLER STREET	HAWICK	TD9 8SB

## Dependant Localities

### 15. Rule 10 – Address with Dependant Localities

Locality information is not required for ECO. In some addresses in PAF there will be no Thoroughfare information available and an address is identifiable by the Postcode, Town and Building Name/Number alone (particularly the case in rural areas). There may however be additional locality information available. In this scenario the Dependant Locality is **not** required for ECO notification, if provided it will cause the validation to fail.

PAF Structure	Fictional Example 1	Fictional Example 2
BUILDING NAME	THE MANOR	
BUILDING NUMBER		10
DEPENDANT LOCALITY	NORWOOD	NORWOOD
POST TOWN	HORLEY	HORLEY
POSTCODE	RH6 0HP	RH6 0HP

#### ECO Format:

Flat Name/Number	Building Number	Building Name	Street Name	Town	Postcode
		THE MANOR		HORLEY	RH6 0HP
	10			HORLEY	RH6 0HP