

Now and again a question pops up on the Bentley discussion groups about text files, and how to read them into a set of coordinates. The `TextFileReader` example shows you how.

We're assuming that you have a text file that contains some kind of coordinate data. For the purpose of this article, I'm assuming that you have X, Y, Z values filed as comma-separated-values (CSV). Here's an example coordinate list ...

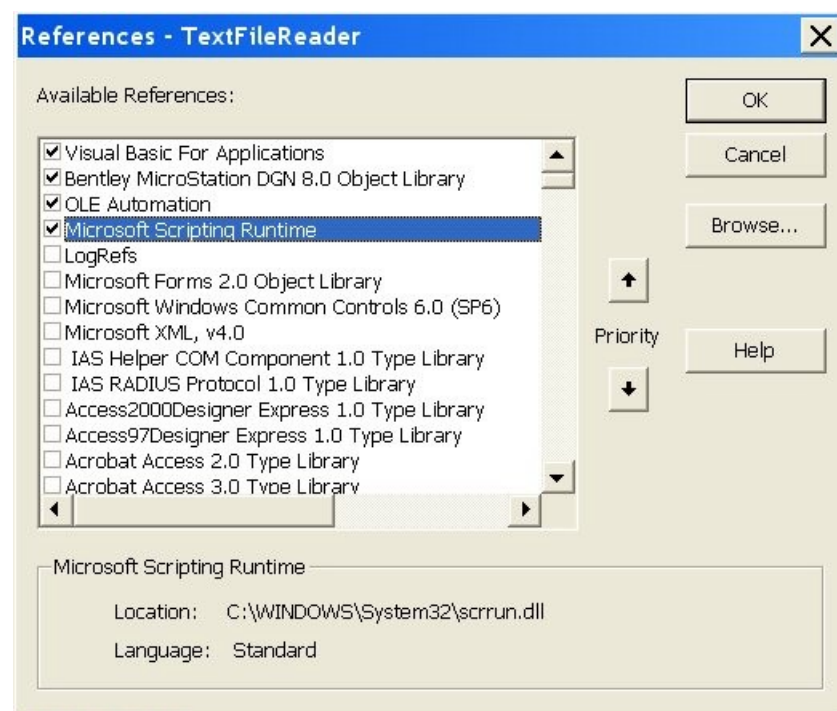
```
; Comma-separated list of Point3D coordinates
; Sample data supplied by LA Solutions Ltd
; http://www.la-solutions.co.uk/
; X, Y, Z
100, 100, 0
110, 100, 0
110, 110, 0
```

The method used to read this list implements these steps ...

1. Open the text file, using a Windows Common Dialog
2. Use a `FileSystemObject` from the Windows Scripting library to open the file
3. Create a `TextStream` object to read each line from the file
4. Parse each line into a `Point3D` coordinate
5. Add the coordinate to a vertex list

Once the file is completely parsed, we have an array of `Point3D` vertices. I don't know what you intend to do with your vertices, but I want to convert mine into a `LineElement`. So, we create a new `LineElement` from the vertex list, then display it and add it to the model file.

You'll need to add a reference to the Windows Scripting library. In the VBA editor, choose the Tools|References menu. Scroll down the list to find the library, and check the box on the left. Click the OK button to complete adding the reference.



The MicroStation VBA project `TextFileReader.mvba` is ready for action and browsing, so you see the code described above. You can download it from the Publications page of our web site. It's in a ZIP archive with a sample coordinate text file unimaginatively named `coordinates.txt`.