

Concordia  University

**Project Report for
COEN6511: ASIC Design**

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Design of a 4-bit comparator

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this project for the course COEN 6511 is to design a 4-bit comparator, aiming to master the techniques of ASIC design.

The details of designing a 4-bit comparator are given in this report. It involves the methodology, circuit implementation, schematic simulation, layout and packaging.

We start from logic gate level, go up to the circuit level and then draw the layout in the environment of CMOSIS5 in which the minimum drawing layout size is 0.6μ . Finally we extract the layout as a symbol in the schematic for re-simulation to obtain the results of the performance measure. In designing, propagation delay, Area (A) and power are considered. All parameters of circuit are decided and the circuit plot and waveform are produced, and we would test and verify every part of the CMOS circuit developed by Cadence development tools . The test results from simulation can meet the requirement. It means that the logic design, schematic and layout are correct, and our project can satisfy the requirements.

1. Introduction

1.1 Description of the project

The goal is the design of a 4-bit comparator. Input two 4-bit numbers A & B. Output is 3-bit (A<B, A>B and A=B). We may use any comparison form and any logic form static, dynamic, or any variation of these or within these families.

1.2 Performance Measures:

(1) Area (A), Time (T), Power (P), or AT^2 are used as circuit performance. Initially we are allowed to specify anyone of these factors to optimize our design.

(2) Testing: Choose an optimum test vector to test the design.

(3) Noise Margins: we are free to choose logic swing. The noise margins should be at least 10% of the voltage swing.

(4) Rise and Fall times: All input signals and clocks have rise and fall times of less than 500 psec. The rise and fall times of the output signals (10% to 90%) should not exceed 1.5 nsec.

(5) Load capacitance: Each output bit of the comparator should have a 20 fF load.

1.3 Simulation:

Perform logic simulation, Circuit Simulation, and re-simulate the extracted circuit after circuit extraction.

1.4 Layout:

Layout two gates of your design fully.

Perform DRC.

Extract the design and simulate it again and characterize these gates.

We are allowed to use any library cell from CADENCE . We are to perform DRC on the final design, extract it and simulate it again to obtain performance measures. Then we are to place and route the complete chip including all I/O drivers and PADs.

Give a complete specification for the circuit.

1.5 Design Kit and process technology

We develop our project by using the Schematic Editor and the Analog Artist simulation tools available from Cadence package (CMOSIS5 design kit). The CMOSIS5 design kit is based on the Hewlett-Packard CMOS14TB process. This is a high-speed, high-density 0.5 micron CMOS process that features a 0.6 micron drawn gate length optimized for 3.3 V operation.

2 Logic design for 4-bit comparator

2.1 logic design procedure

Magnitude comparator is a combinational circuit that compares two numbers and determines their relative magnitude. A comparator is shown as figure 2.1. The output of comparator is usually 3 binary variables indicating:

A>B
A=B
A<B

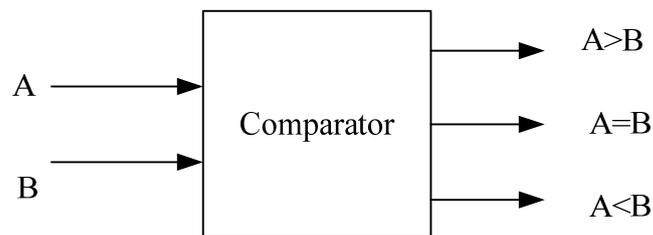


Figure 2.1 1-bit comparator

For a 2-bit comparator (Figure 2.2), we have four inputs A_1A_0 and B_1B_0 and three outputs:

E (is 1 if two numbers are equal)
G (is 1 when $A > B$) and
L (is 1 when $A < B$)

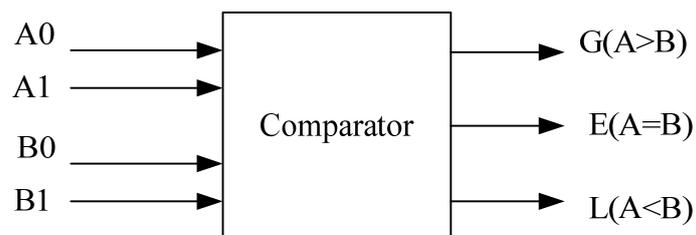


Figure 2.2 2-bit comparator

If we use truth table and KMAP, the result is

$$E = A'1A'0B'1B'0 + A'1A0B'1B0 + A1A0B1B0 + A1A'0B1B'0$$

$$\text{or } E = ((A_0 \oplus B_0) + (A_1 \oplus B_1))'$$

$$G = A_1B'1 + A_0B'1B'0 + A_1A_0B'0$$

$$L = A'1B_1 + A'1A'0B_0 + A'0B_1B_0$$

Here we use simpler method to find E (called X) and G (called Y) and L (called Z)

(1) $A=B$ if all $A_i = B_i$

Table 2.1

A _i	B _i	X _i
0	0	1
0	1	0
1	0	0
1	1	0

It means $X_0 = A_0B_0 + A'_0B'_0$ and

$$X_1 = A_1B_1 + A'_1B'_1$$

If $X_0=1$ and $X_1=1$ then $A_0=B_0$ and $A_1=B_1$

Thus, if $A=B$ then $X_0X_1 = 1$ it means

$$X = (A_0B_0 + A'_0B'_0)(A_1B_1 + A'_1B'_1)$$

since $(x \oplus y)' = (xy + x'y)'$

$$X = (A_0 \oplus B_0)' (A_1 \oplus B_1)' = ((A_0 \oplus B_0) + (A_1 \oplus B_1))'$$

It means for X we can NOR the result of two exclusive-OR gates.

(2) $A > B$ means

Table 2.2

A ₁	B ₁	Y ₁
0	0	0
0	1	0
1	0	1
1	1	0

If $A_1=B_1$ ($X_1=1$) then A_0 should be 1 and B_0 should be 0

Table 2.3

A ₀	B ₀	Y ₀
0	0	1
0	1	0
1	0	0
1	1	0

For $A > B$: $A_1 > B_1$ or

$$A_1 = B_1 \text{ and } A_0 > B_0$$

It means $Y = A_1B'_1 + X_1A_0B'_0$ should be 1 for $A > B$.

(3) For $B > A$: $B_1 > A_1$ or

$$A_1 = B_1 \text{ and } B_0 > A_0$$

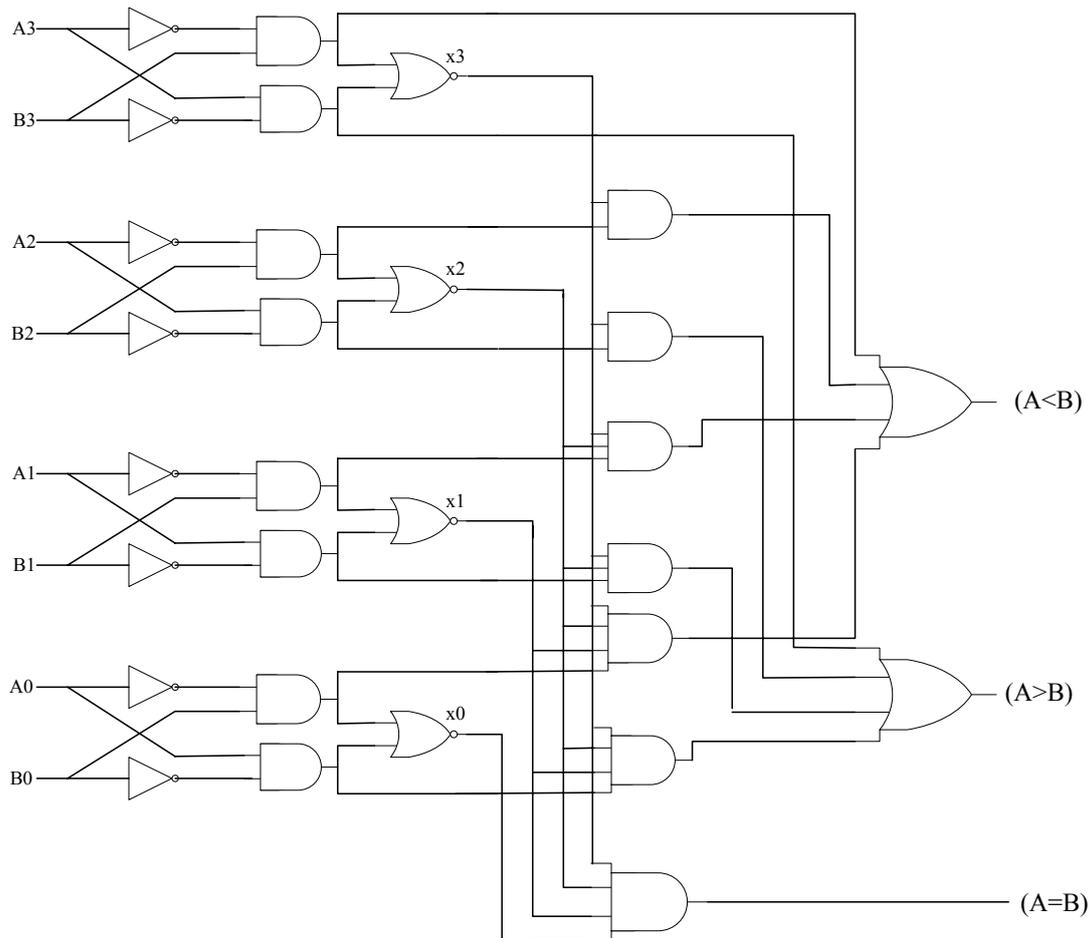
$$Z = A'_1B_1 + X_1A'_0B_0$$

2.2 4-Bit Comparator

The procedure for binary numbers with more than 2 bits can also be found in the similar way. The figure 2.3 shows the 4-bit magnitude comparator.

Input A=A₃A₂A₁A₀;

B=B₃B₂B₁B₀



4-Bit Magnitude Comparator

Figure 2. 3 4- bit Magnitude Comparator

(1)A = B : A₃=B₃, A₂=B₂, A₁=B₁, A₀=B₀

$x_i = A_i B_i + A_i' B_i'$

XOR-Invert = $(A_i B_i + A_i' B_i)'$

$= (A_i' + B_i)(A_i + B_i')$

$= A_i' A_i + A_i' B_i' + A_i B_i + B_i B_i'$

$= A_i B_i + A_i' B_i'$

Output: x₃x₂x₁x₀

(2) $A > B$

Output: $A_3B_3' + x_3A_2B_2' + x_3x_2A_1B_1' + x_3x_2x_1A_0B_0'$

(3) $A < B$

Output: $A_3'B_3 + x_3A_2'B_2 + x_3x_2A_1'B_1 + x_3x_2x_1A_0'B_0$

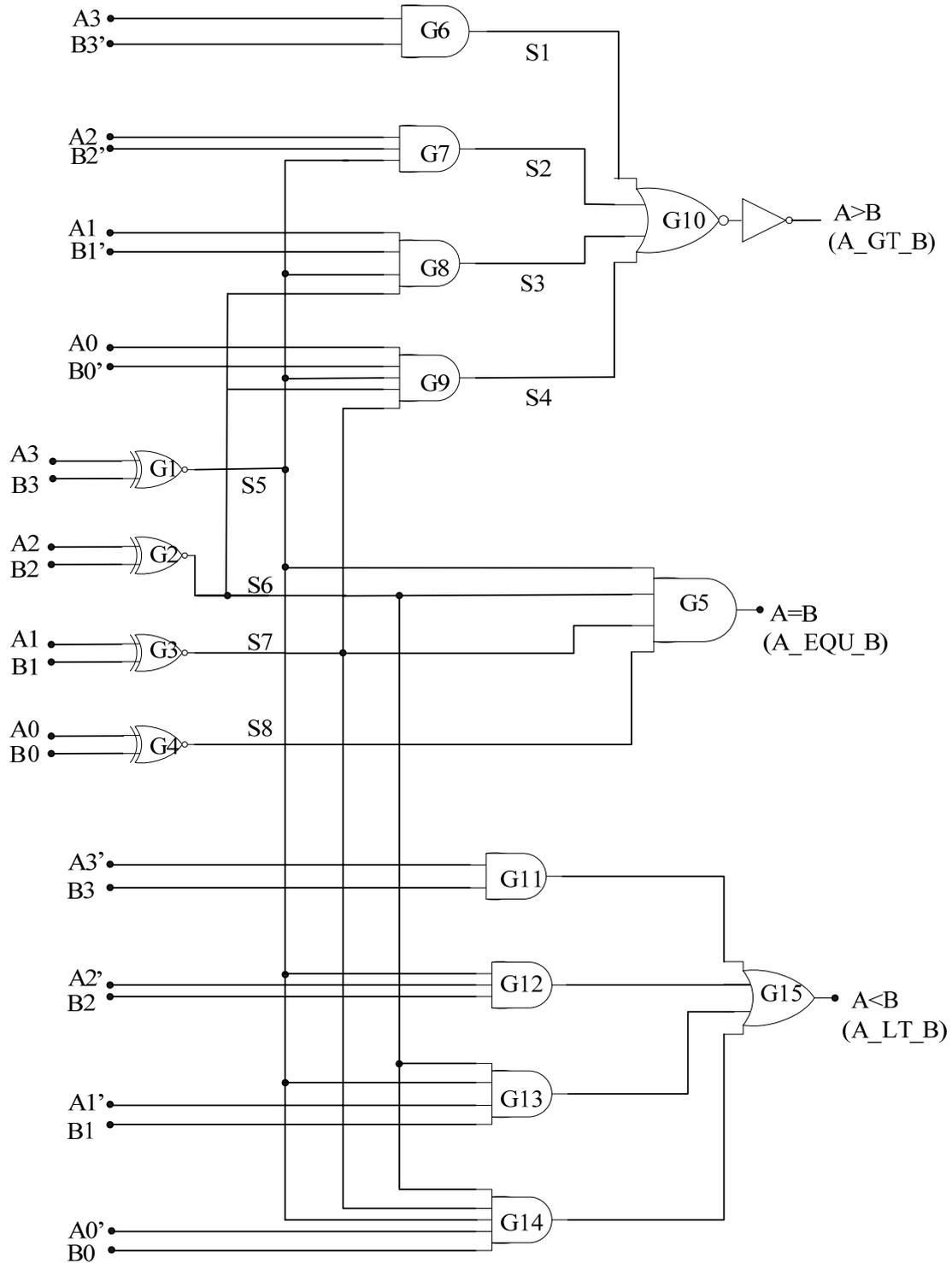
Table 2.4 Truth table of 4-Bit Comparator

COMPARING INPUTS				OUTPUT		
A3, B3	A2, B2	A1, B1	A0, B0	A > B	A < B	A = B
A3 > B3	X	X	X	H	L	L
A3 < B3	X	X	X	L	H	L
A3 = B3	A2 > B2	X	X	H	L	L
A3 = B3	A2 < B2	X	X	L	H	L
A3 = B3	A2 = B2	A1 > B1	X	H	L	L
A3 = B3	A2 = B2	A1 < B1	X	L	H	L
A3 = B3	A2 = B2	A1 = B1	A0 > B0	H	L	L
A3 = B3	A2 = B2	A1 = B1	A0 < B0	L	H	L
A3 = B3	A2 = B2	A1 = B1	A0 = B0	H	L	L
A3 = B3	A2 = B2	A1 = B1	A0 = B0	L	H	L
A3 = B3	A2 = B2	A1 = B1	A0 = B0	L	L	H

H = High Voltage Level, L = Low Voltage Level, X = Don't Care

2.3 4-Bit Comparator Implement

In order to implement the above circuit with fewer gates, we modify the circuit that is shown in figure 2.4.



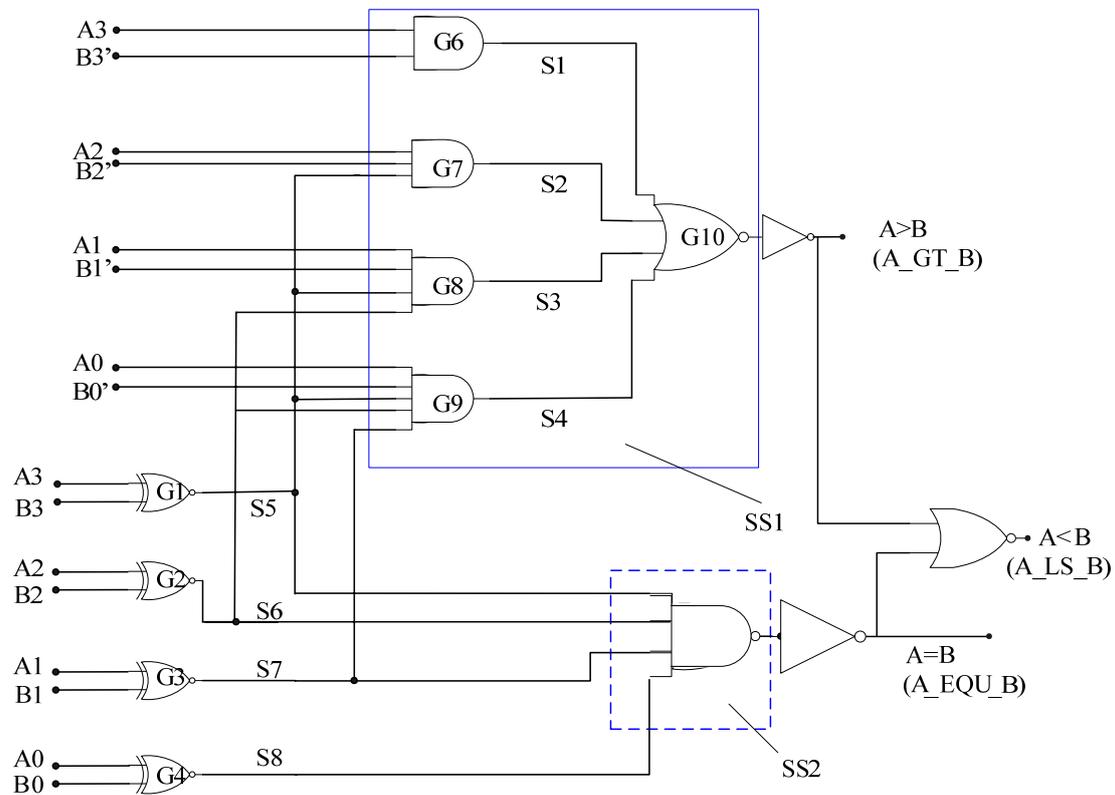
Logic diagram for a 4-bit comparator

Figure 2.4 Logic diagram for a 4-bit comparator

In order to reduce the area, we can still decrease the number of gates. The logic of $A < B$ can be decided by $A > B$ and $A = B$, so we can simplify the above circuit as figure

2.5.

2-input NOR is used here to realize the function of $A < B$. The area of 2-input NOR is much less than that of G11~G15. On the other hand, fewer gates means fewer power, so this modification can greatly reduce the power dissipation. Therefore, the logic optimization is completed.



Optimized logic diagram for a 4-bit comparator

Figure 2.5 Optimized logic diagram for a 4_bit comparator

Seeing from the above diagram, we can use 11 gates to implement the 4-Bit comparator beside the inverters. The kind of gates includes XOR, AND, NOR. 4 gates of XOR are the same. 5 gates of AND have different number of inputs, but the principle of layout is the same. So does the NOR gate.

2.4 Logic simulation

In order to verify above design, we start to do logic simulation. The diagram is shown as figure 2.6

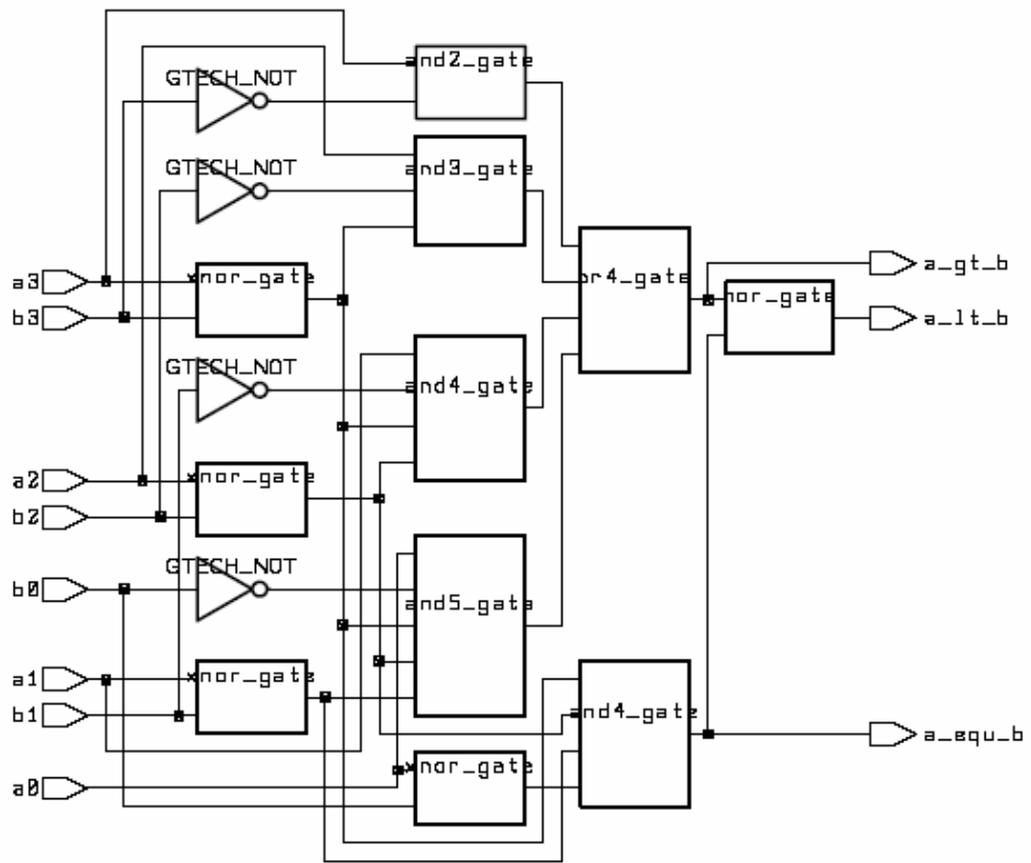


Figure 2.6 Logic simulation diagram

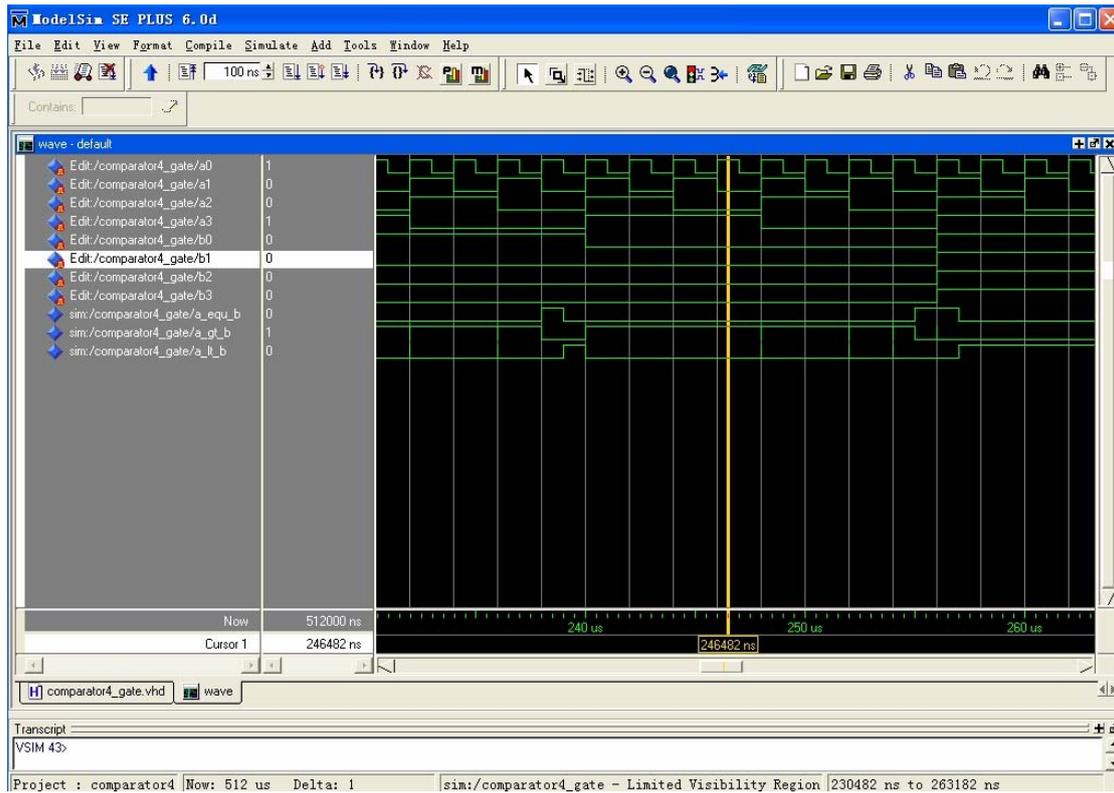


Figure 2.7 Logic simulation result

From the simulation results (figure 2.7), we can get the conclusion that our logic analysis is strictly right and then we begin to develop schematic level design.

3. Schematic level design and simulation

From the simplified logic diagram, we can see that the circuit include 4 XOR gates, 5 AND gates with inputs from 2 to 5, 4 inputs and 2 inputs NOR and 5 inverters. In designing, we select the time and the area as performance index for optimization. Although area is an advantage for pseudo-Nmos, we will not adopt it after entirely thinking about t_d , t_{phl} , t_{plh} , area, power dissipation and other performance parameters.

The time performance that we consider in this project includes propagation delay, T_r and T_f . As shown in the simplified logic diagram, The SS1 block is more complicated than other parts of circuit, so we choose propagation as the first index. We initially choose the size $W_p_{eff}=1.73W_n_{eff}$. In other blocks we initially choose $W_p_{eff}=3W_n_{eff}$ to make T_r equal to T_f .

In the diagram(figure 2.5), we can see that a 4 input NOR is used in the circuit. As we know, NOR gates are costly. For the same performance, it results in increased area, power, delay, output load capacitance (due to an increase in drain diffusion capacitance) and increase in input capacitance presenting higher load to driver circuit. Normally we convert our circuit to NAND and avoid use of large fan in NOR. But in this project, we still choose 2 inputs NOR as for practice since its fan-in is only 2, and measure the performance to get the detailed data with which we can compare the characteristics.

Here we display four parts of comparator schematic: XNOR, NOR, SS1, SS2, and measure it after simulation.

3.1 XNOR circuit and simulation

XNOR schematic diagram is shown as figure 3.1

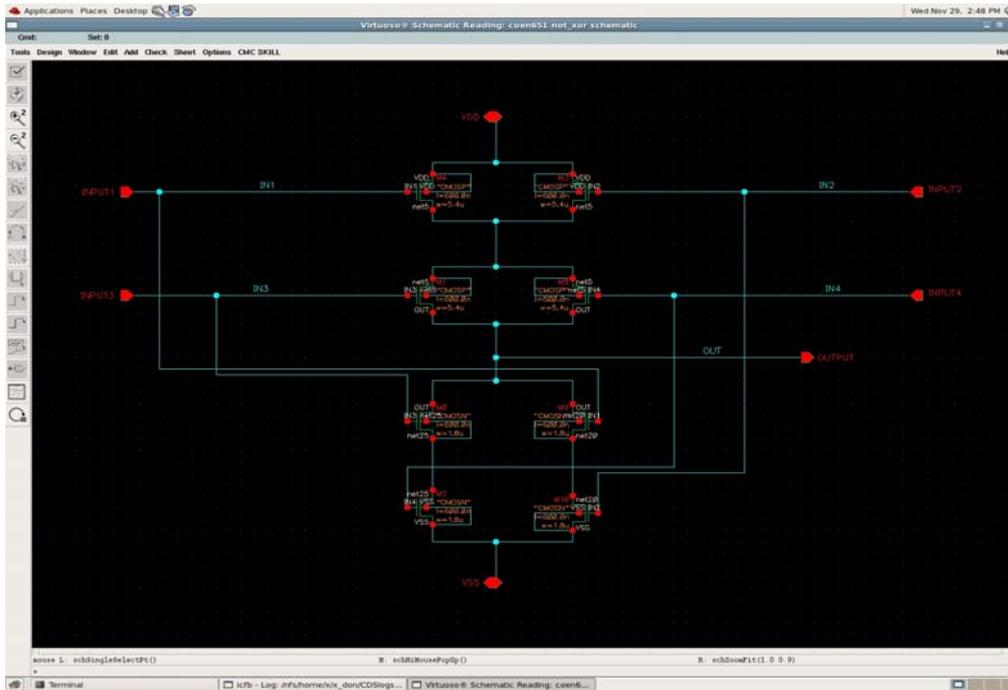


Figure 3.1 Schematic of XNOR

In the circuit, $W_p=5.4\mu\text{m}$, $W_n=1.8\mu\text{m}$, $L=0.6\mu\text{m}$,
 The simulation is done in the Synopsys simulation platform. The simulation waveform is shown as figure 3.2:

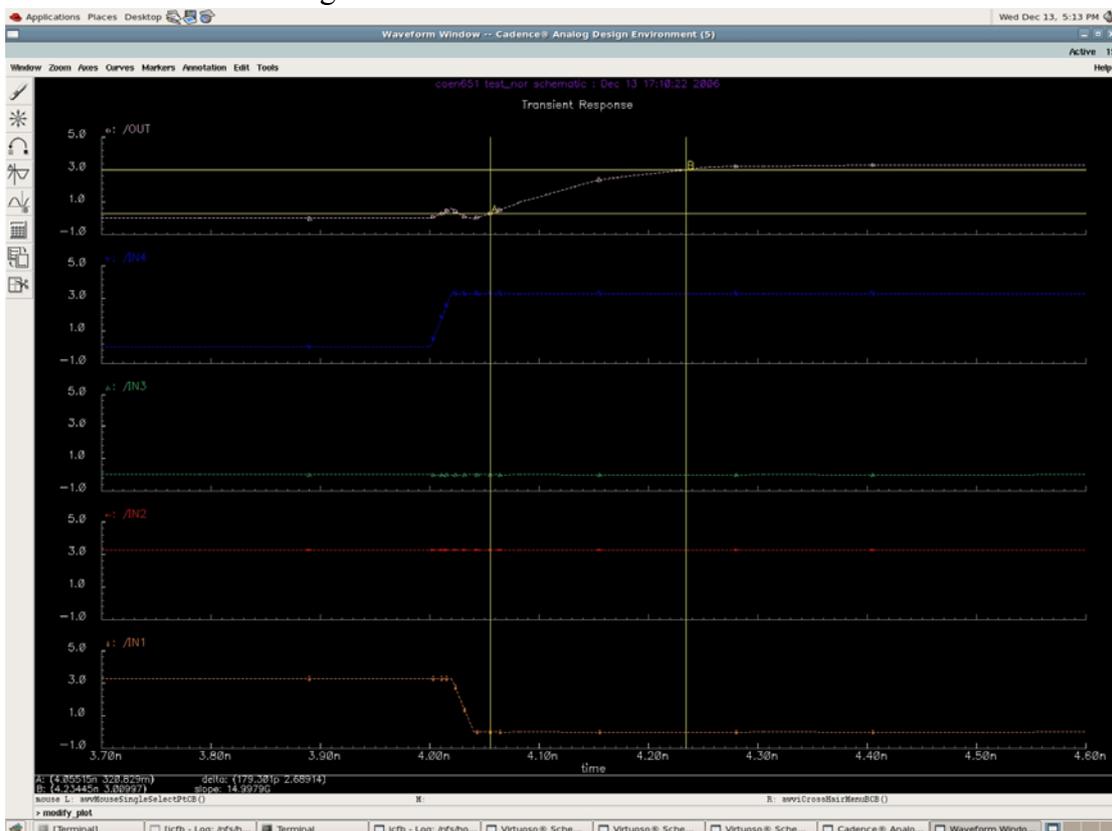


Figure 3.2 XNOR simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 3.1

table 3.1

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	Average power
106.7ps	113.5ps	179.3ps	107.0ps	$3.755e-7w$

3.2 NOR circuit and simulation

2 inputs NOR schematic diagram is shown as figure 3.3

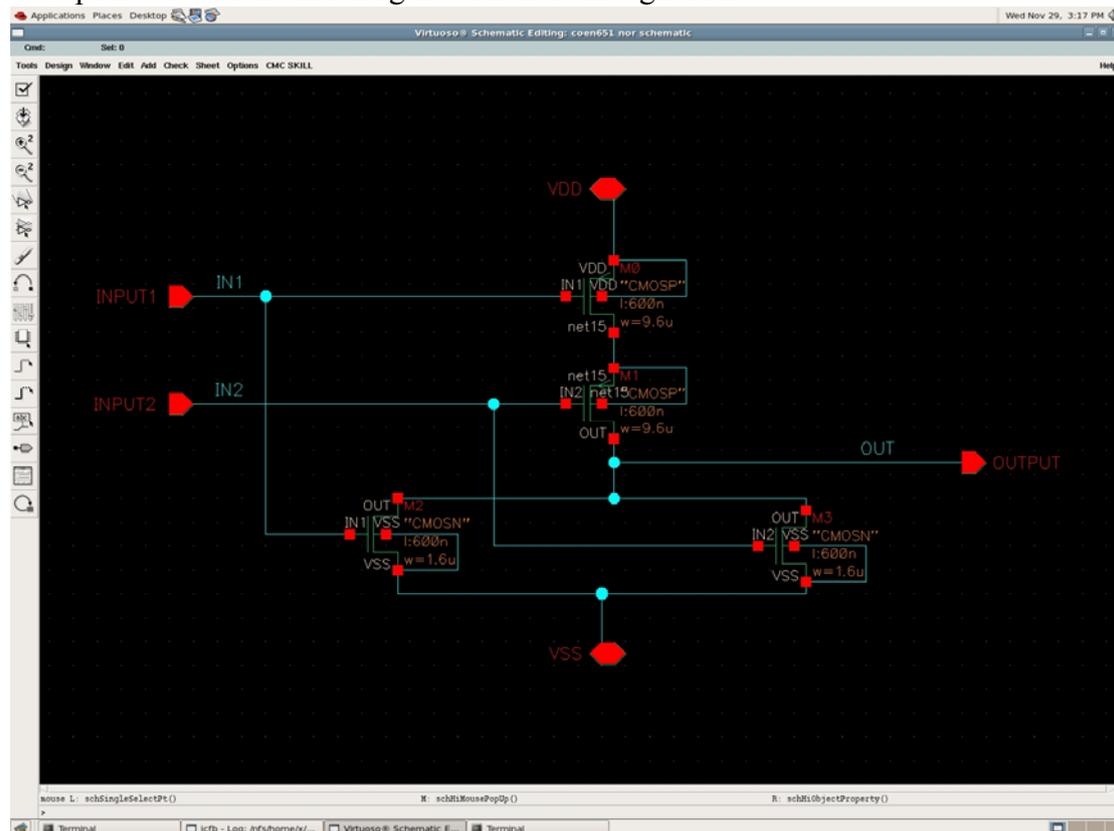


Figure 3.3 Schematic of NOR

For each transistor in the circuit, $L = 0.6\mu m$, $W_p = 9.6\mu m$, $W_n = 1.6\mu m$
 The simulation waveform is shown as figure 3.4:

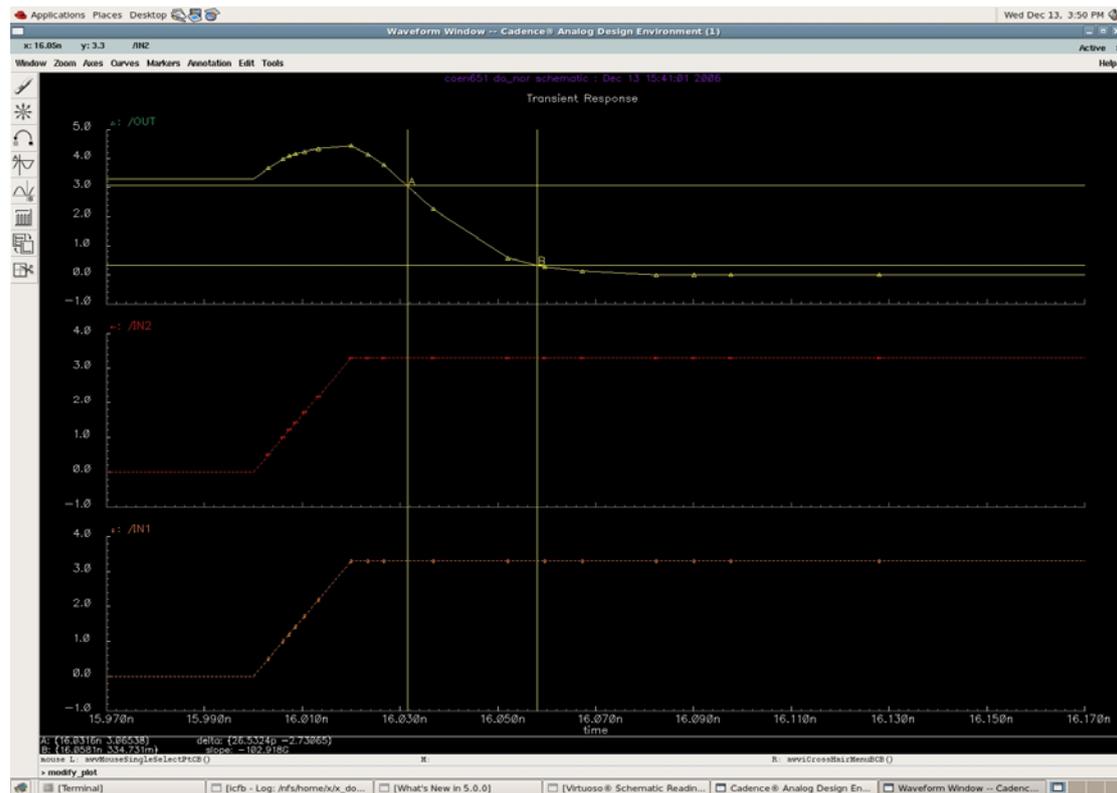


Figure 3.4 NOR simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 3.2

table 3.2

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	Average power
72.3ps	57.01ps	115.0ps	26.5ps	1.636e-8w

3.3 SS1 circuit and simulation

The part of SS1 circuit includes G6,G7,G8,G9,G10 shown in the diagram. Its schematic diagram is shown as figure 3.5:



Figure 3.5 Schematic of SS1

In the circuit, $W_p = 10.8\text{microns}$, $W_n = 3.6\text{microns}$, $L = 0.6\text{micron}$
 The simulation waveform is shown as figure 3.6:

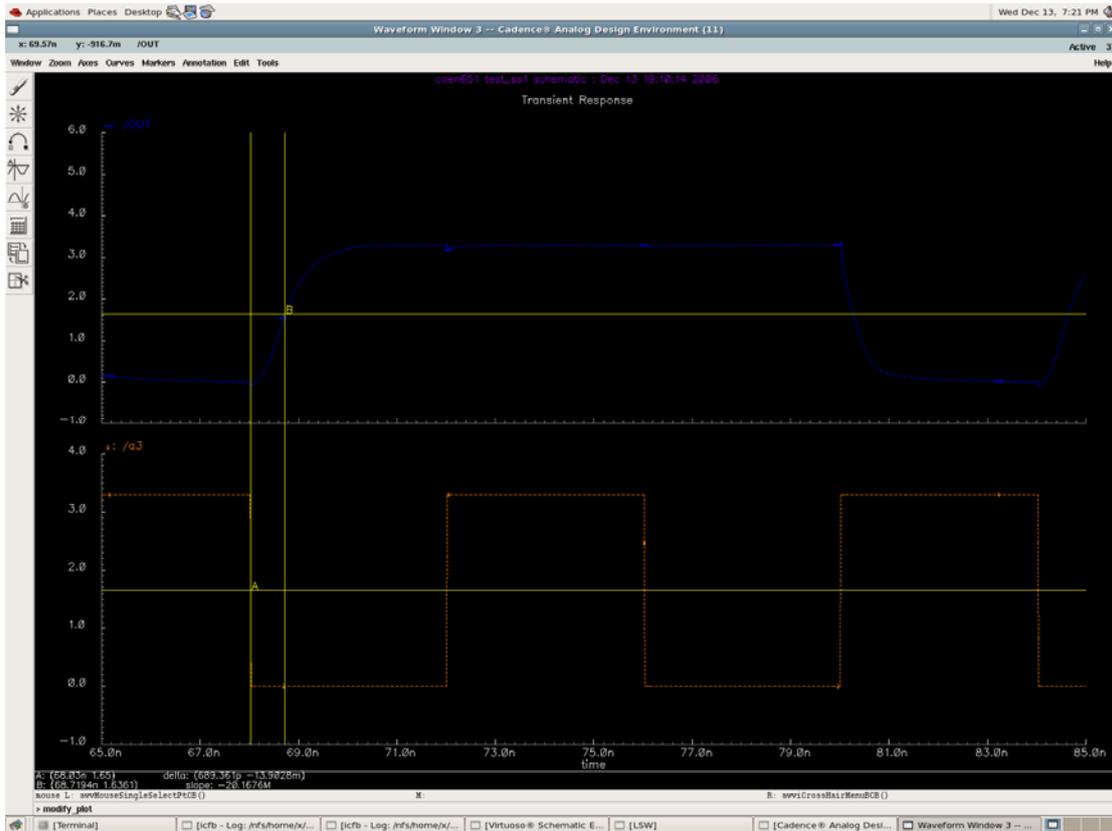


Figure 3.6 SS1 simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 3.3

table 3.3

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	Average power
689.4ps	257.6ps	1209.0ps	716.0ps	1.744e-5w

3.4 SS2 (4 Input AND) circuit and simulation

The schematic diagram of SS2 is shown as figure 3.7

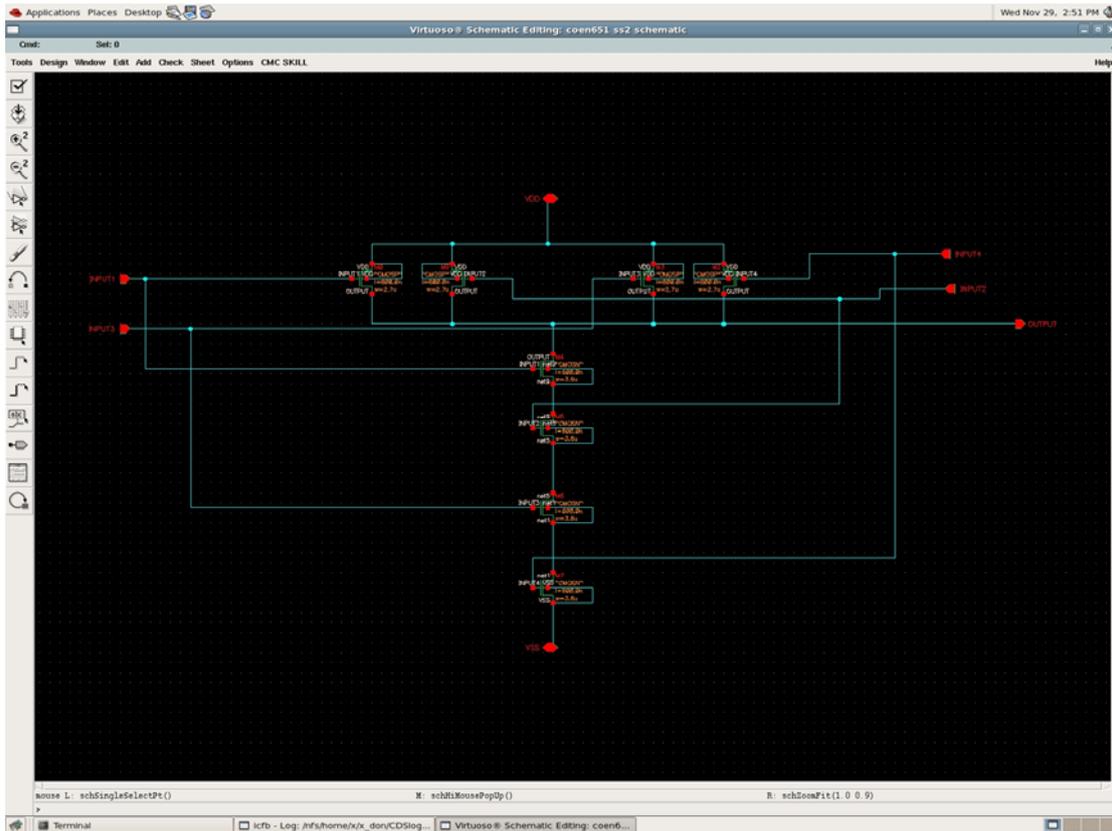


Figure 3.7 Schematic of SS2

In the circuit, $W_p=3.6\mu\text{m}$, $W_n=2.7\mu\text{m}$, $L=0.6\mu\text{m}$
 The simulation waveform is shown as figure 3.8:



Figure 3.8 SS2 simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 3.4

Table 3.4

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	Average power
106.9p	111.0p	156.9p	146.2p	1.606e-07w

3.5 4-Bit comparator circuit and simulation

As we finished the above gates and circuit, we can integrate them as the whole 4-Bit comparator. The following (figure 3.9) is the testbench schematic of 4-Bit comparator.

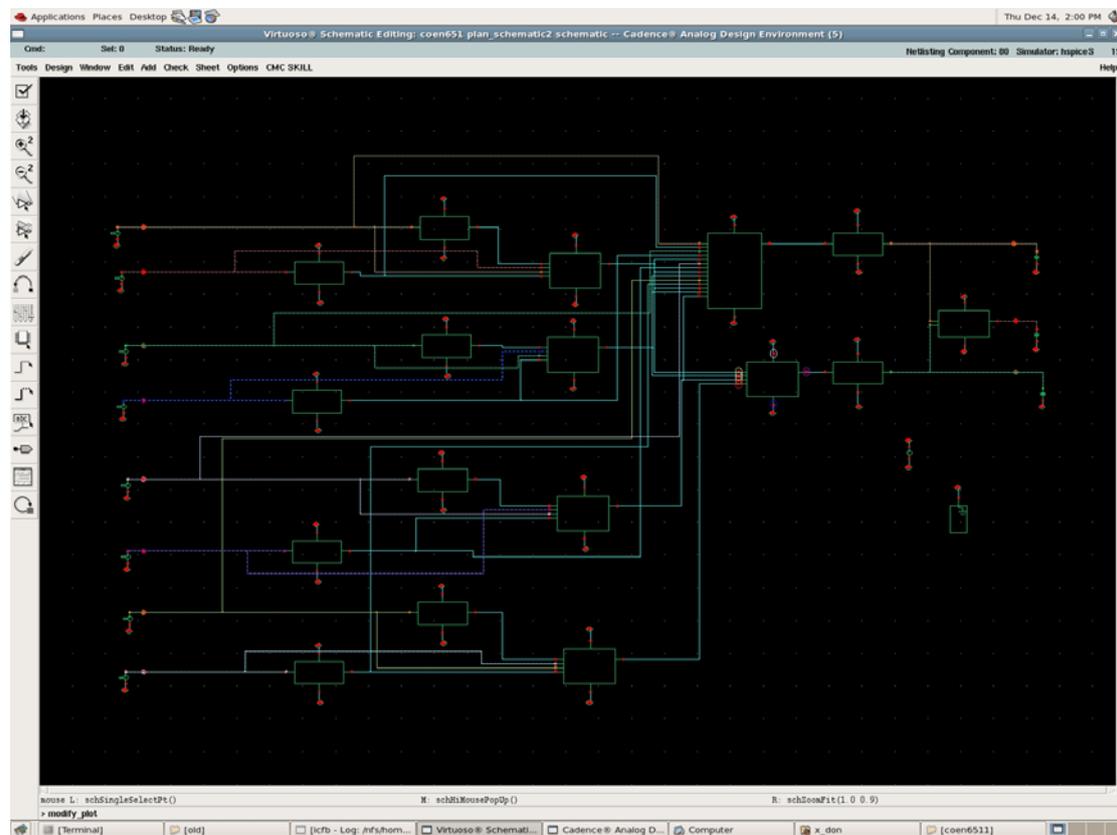


Figure 3.9 Testbench schematic of whole 4-bit comparator

The simulation waveform is shown as figure 3.10



Figure 3.10 4-bit comparator simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 3.5:

Table 3.5

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	Average power
992.33ps	1102.7ps	349.5ps	340.5ps	2.447e-06w

As shown in the waveform and table, our design can meet the project requirements, and then we can start to develop the layout.

4 Layout and test

Having finished the schematic level design and simulation successfully, we can do the layout and extract it to the schematic for test.

Although we only need to layout 2 gates in this project and can use any standard library, **we plan to layout all the gates by ourselves**. The first reason is that the standard library maybe cannot meet our requirement. In most situations, we need to adjust the parameter of the transistor to meet the requirements of the project. For example, we need to adjust the W_p/W_n , Spacing, width to obtain the desired characteristics. However, the layout from standard library is difficult to adjust to meet our requirements. In addition, more layouts by hand can help us to improve the skills, and it is one of the purposes of the project we believe.

4.1 Layout of XNOR

The layout of XNOR is shown as figure 4.1

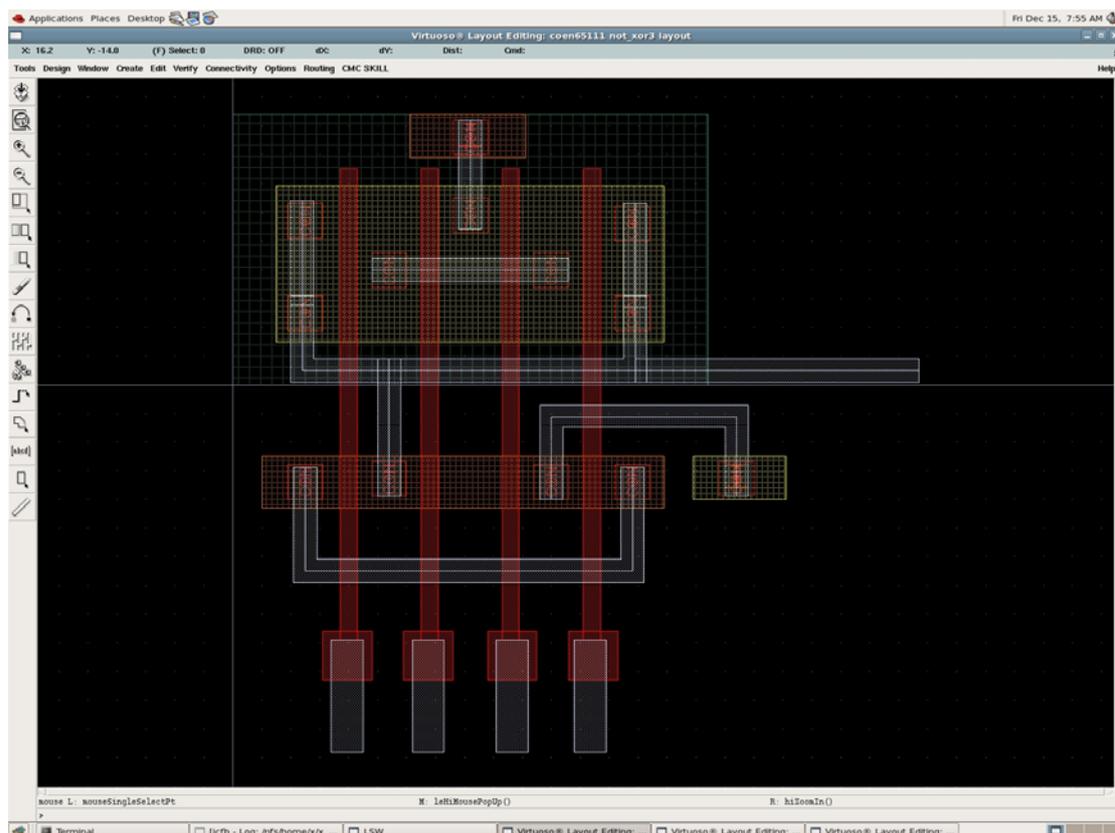


Figure 4.1 the layout of XNOR

We extract it as a symbol and test it in the test schematic. The simulation waveform is shown as figure 4.2:

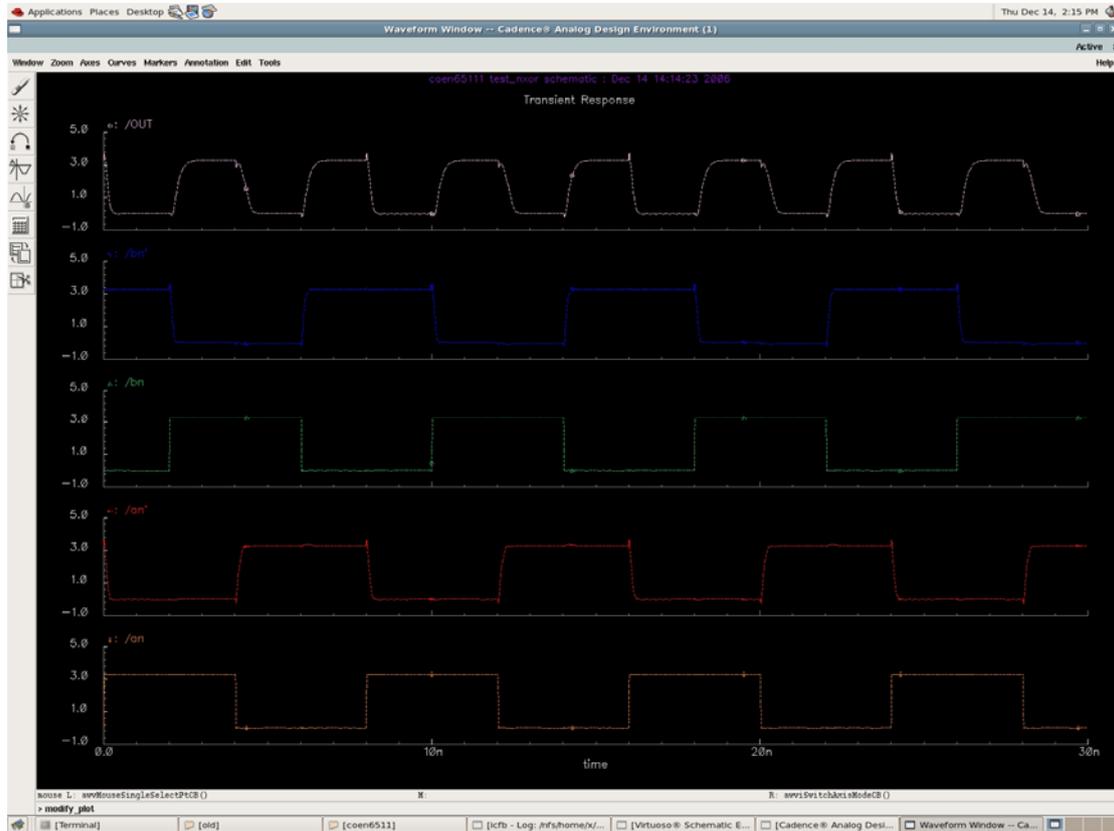


Figure 4.2 Extracted XNOR simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 4.1

Table 4.1

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	NM_L	NM_H	Aaverage power	Area (μm^2)
230.0ps	305.2ps	349.6ps	271.1ps	0.93v	1.80v	1.812e-06w	19.8*16.4

4.2 Layout of NOR

The layout of AND is shown as figure 4.3.

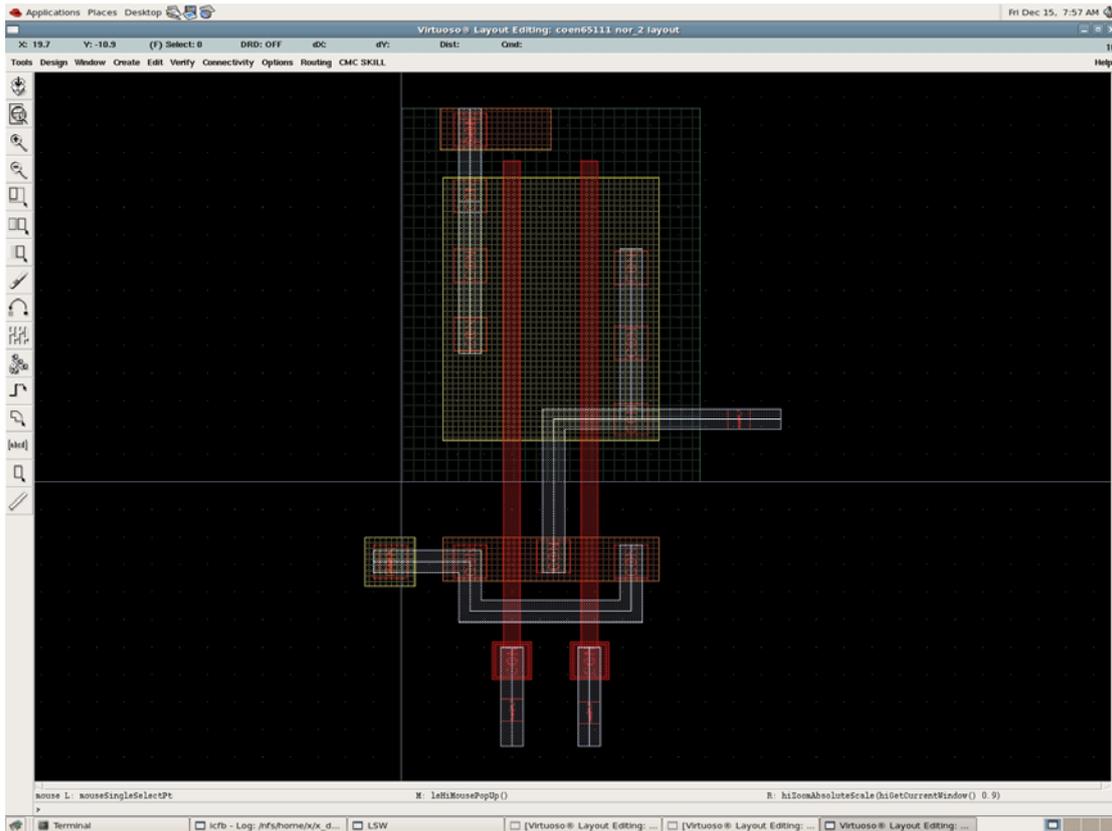


Figure 4.3 the layout of NOR

We extract it as a symbol and test it in the test schematic. The simulation waveform is shown as figure 4.4:



Figure 4.4 Extracted NOR simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 4.2:

Table 4.2

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	NM_L	NM_H	Average power	Area (μm^2)
103.4ps	80.63ps	166.3ps	96.6ps	0.82v	1.76v	1.14e-06w	47.7*32.4

4.3 Layout of SS1

SS1 is the most complicated part in the project. Euler network of SS1 is shown as below according which we can minimize the area of layout.

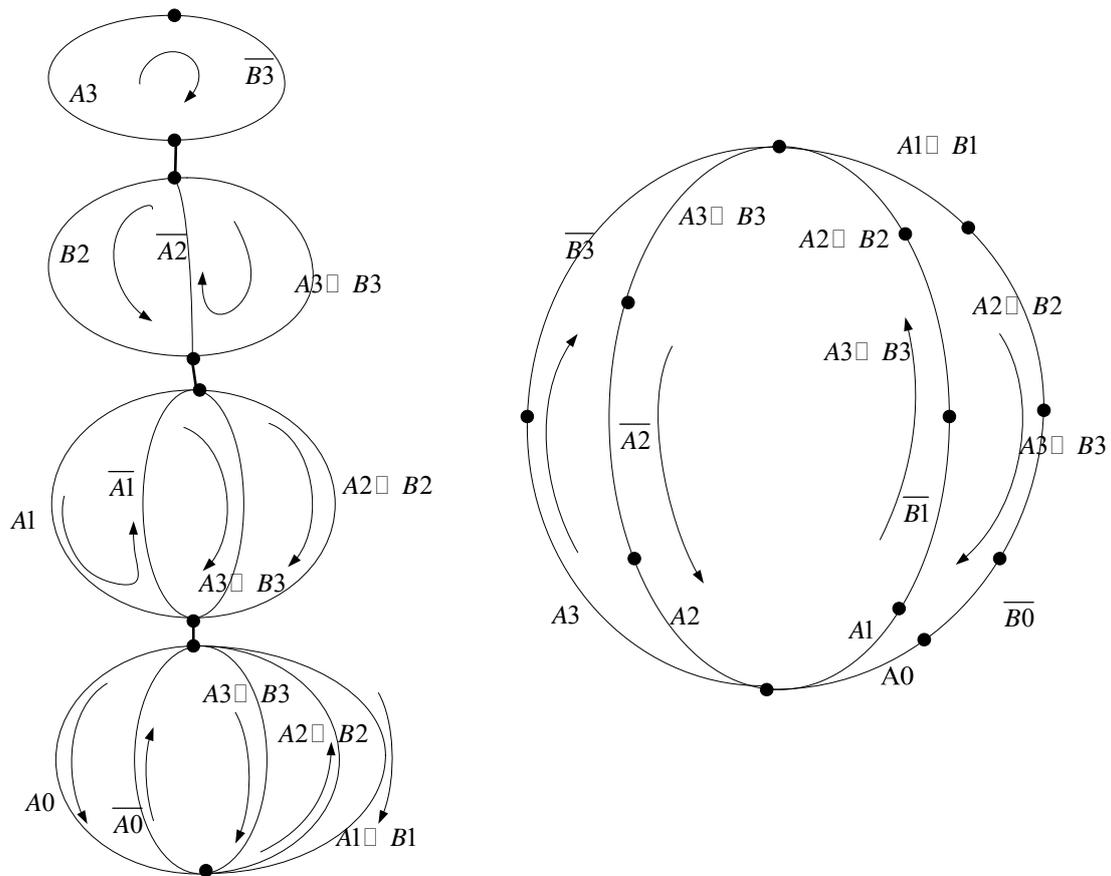


Figure 4.5 Euler network of SS1

The layout of SS1 is shown as figure 4.6:

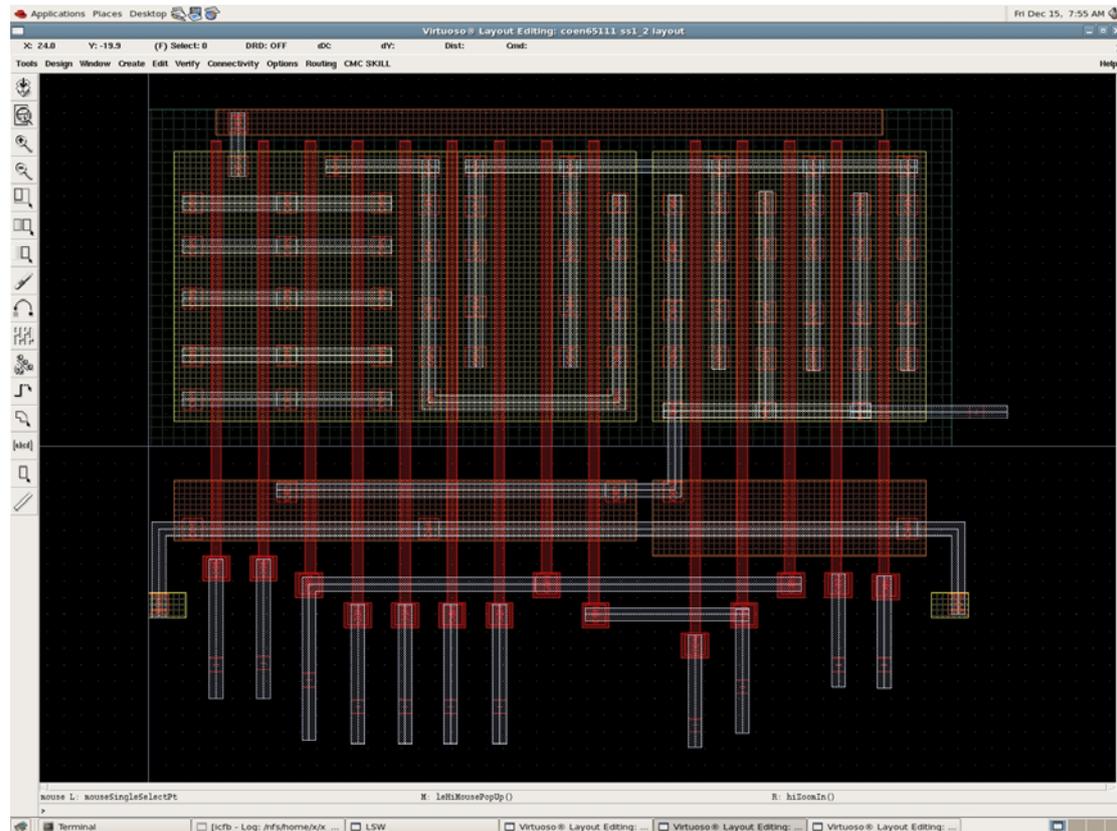


Figure 4.6 the layout of SS1

We extract it as a symbol and test it in the test schematic. The simulation waveform is shown as figure 4.7:



Figure 4.7 Extracted SS1 simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 4.3:

Table 4.3

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	NM_L	NM_H	Average power	Area (μm^2)
712.4ps	593.8ps	1130.3ps	1041.2ps	0.98v	1.86v	4.3e-06w	47.7*32.4

4.4 Layout of SS2

The layout of SS2 is shown as figure 4.8:

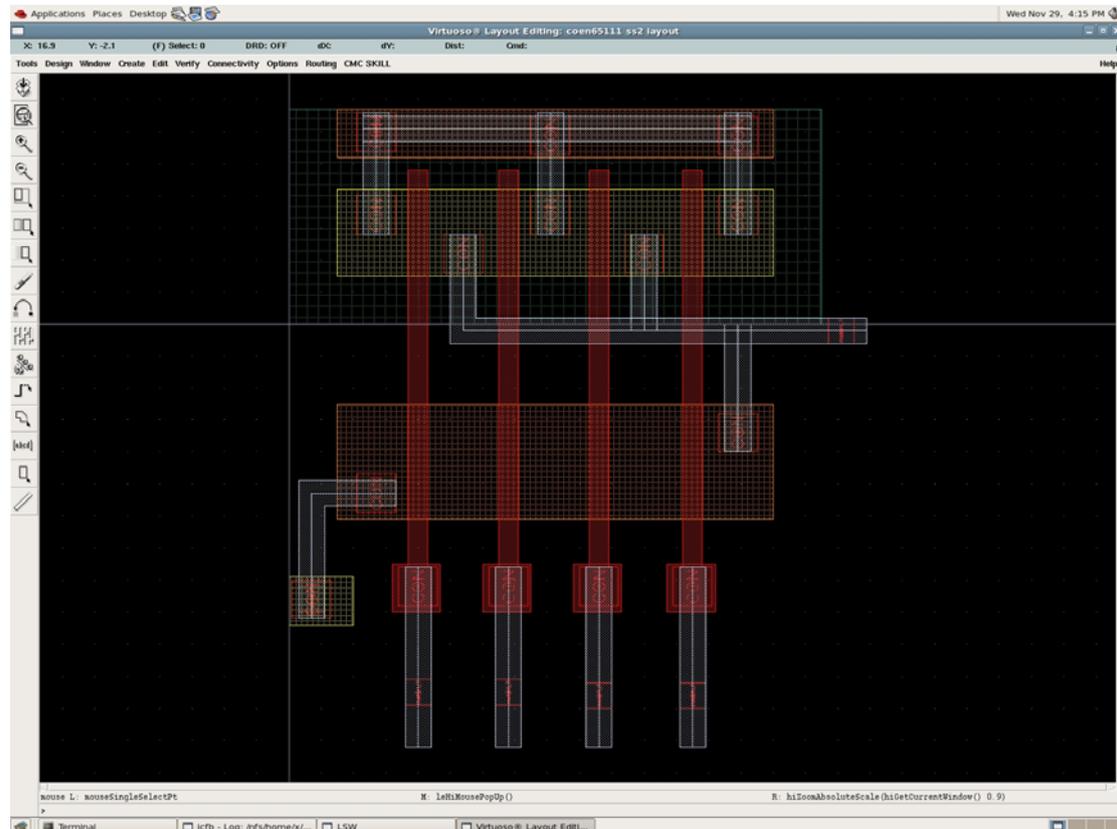


Figure 4.8 the layout of SS1

We extract it as a symbol and test it in the test schematic. The simulation waveform is shown as figure 4.9:

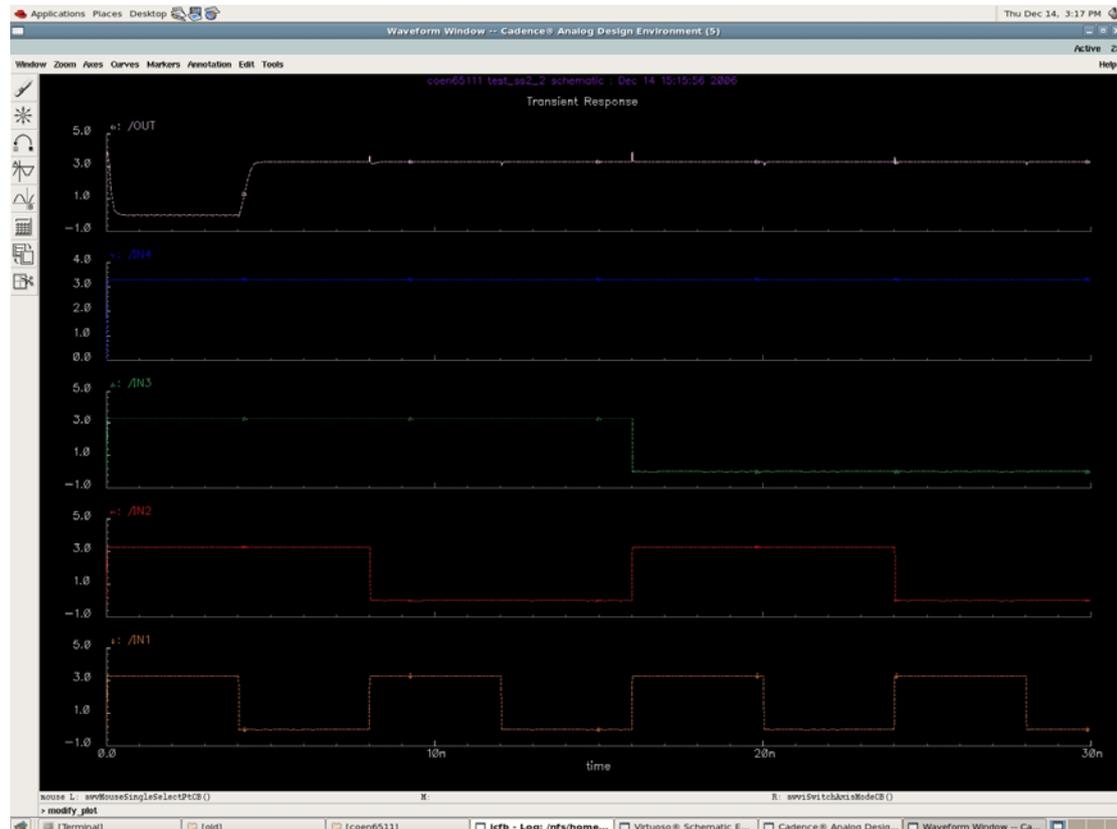


Figure 4.9 Extracted SS2 simulation waveform

The test result is shown as table 4.4:

Table 4.4

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	NM_L	NM_H	average power	Area (μm^2)
212.3ps	195.2ps	265.5ps	164.6ps	0.85v	1.70v	1.77e-06w	16.5*16.7

4.5 Layout of 4-Bit Comparator

The layout of 4-Bit comparator is shown as figure 4.10:

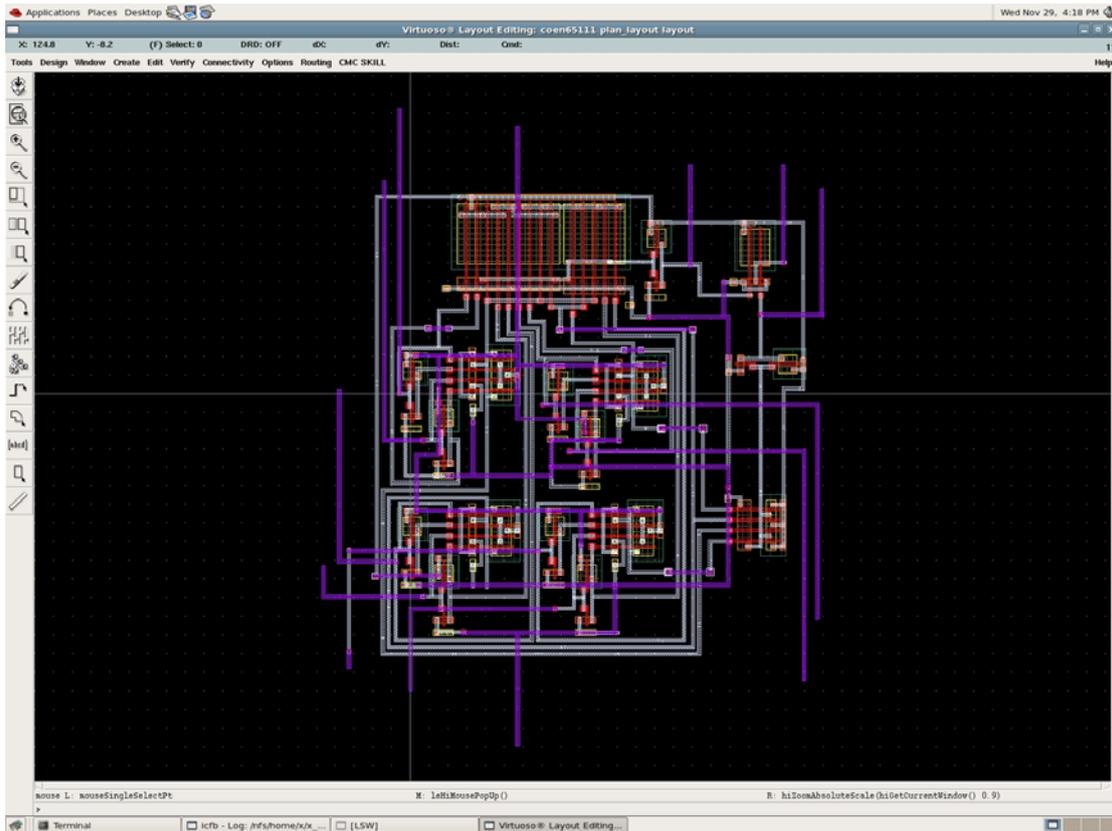
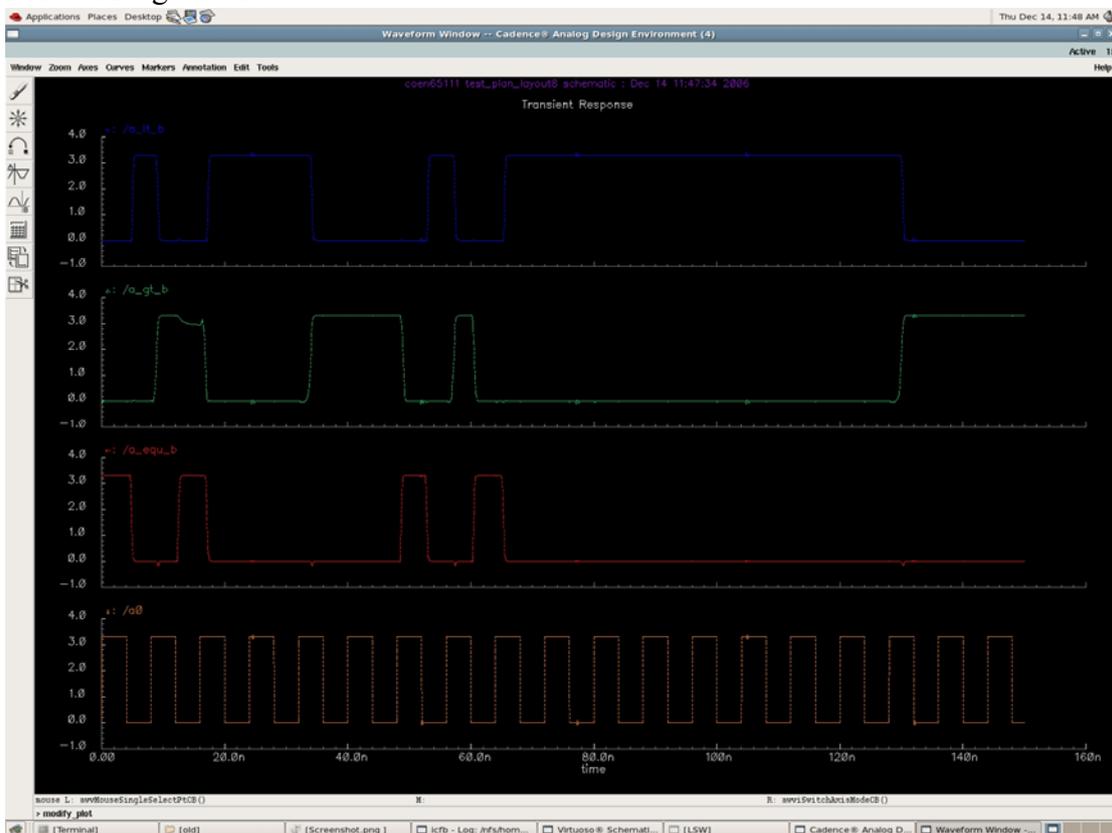


Figure 4.10 the layout of whole 4-bit comparator

We extract it as a symbol and test it in the test schematic. The simulation waveform is shown as figure 4.9:



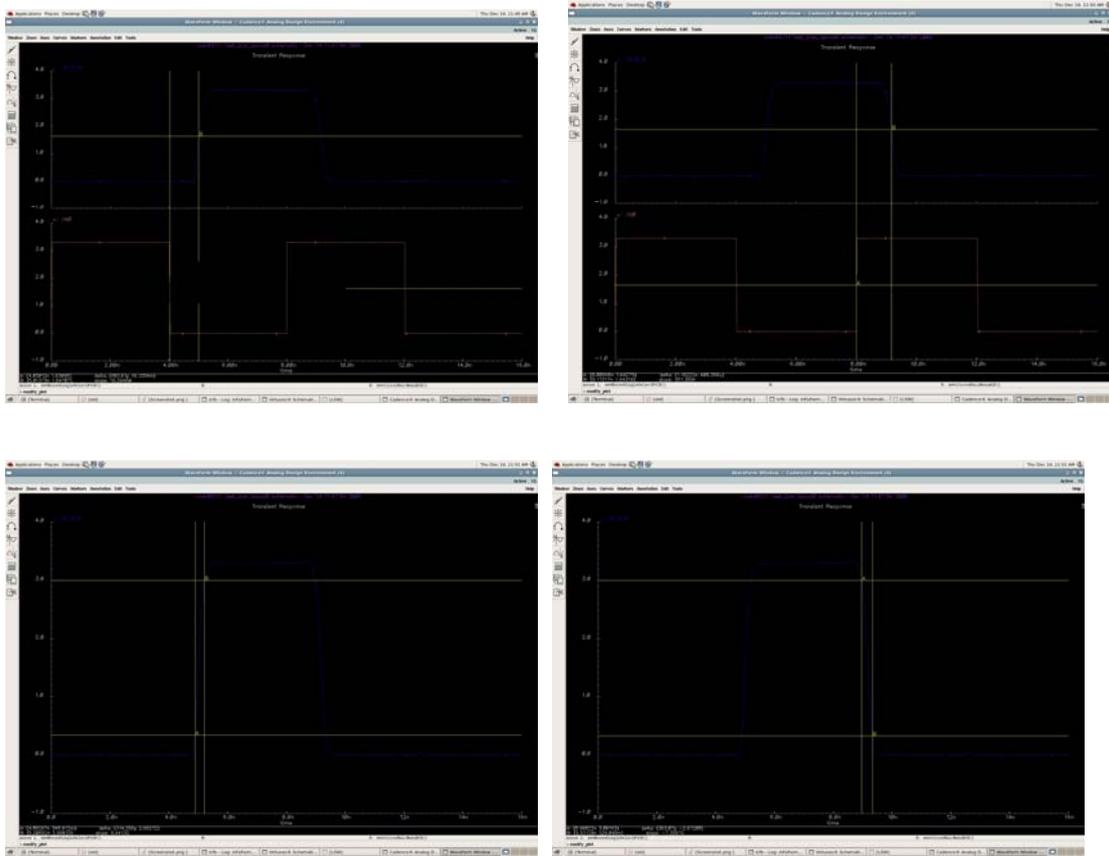


Figure 4.9 Extracted 4-bit comparator simulation waveform

According to diagram above, the objective test results can be shown as table 4.5:

Table4.5

T_{PLH}	T_{PHL}	T_r	T_f	NM_L	NM_H	Average power	Area (μm^2)
983.61ps	1162.2ps	314.3ps	363.1ps	0.88v	1.82v	7.842e-06w	114.8*124.3

4.6 Conclusion

From the layouts and tables, we can see that our design can satisfy the requirements. Area is a very important index in ASIC design. As for us, it is first time to layout gates and whole circuit. One of the experiences is that the minimum area of each gate does not mean the minimum area of whole circuit can be reached. For integration of gates, we also need to consider the direction of signal and its connection. Unreasonable layout of signal direction will waste much area when we integrate gates to a whole layout.

5 Packaging

In our chip, there are 8 input pads : A0-A3,B0-B3. We use the pads of PADINC in hells library, then make the connection with the correspondent input in the circuit using metal1 dg layer. There are 3 output pads: G(A>B), E(A=B), L(A<B); The other two pads is VDD and VSS. The PAD connections are shown as figure 5.1:

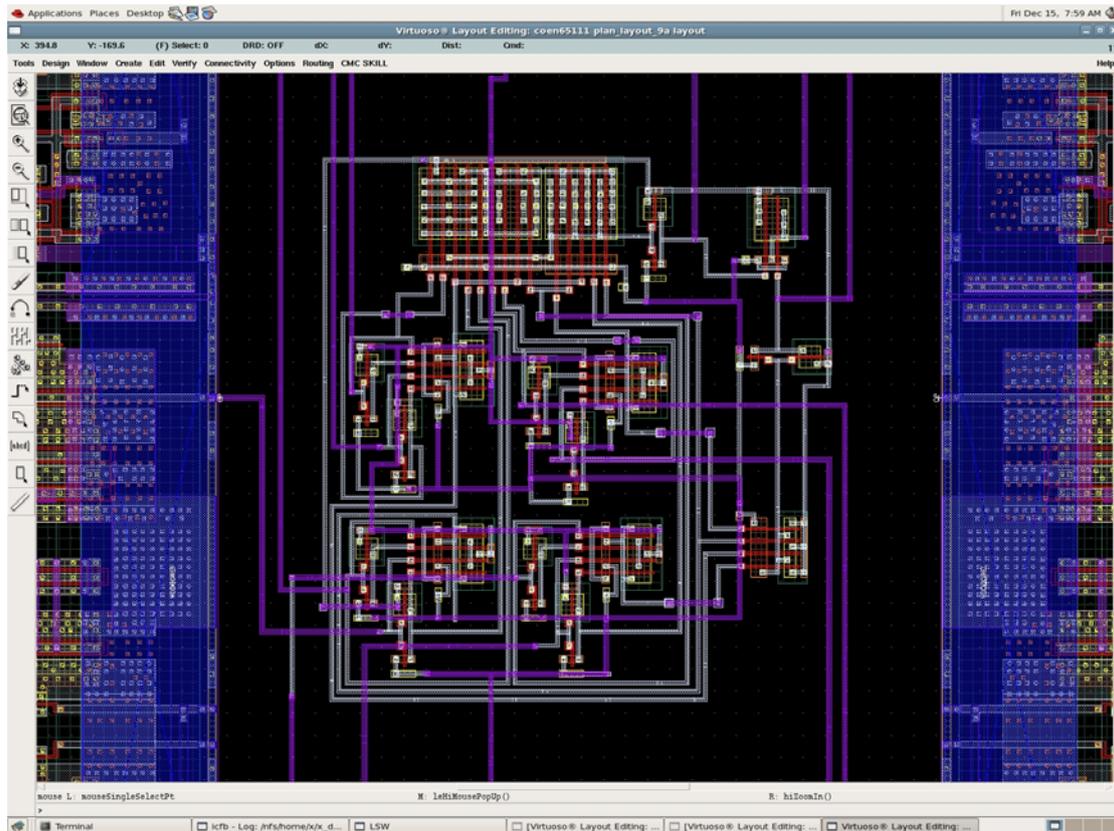


Figure 5.1 PAD connection

Figure 5.2 is the whole circuit layout with I/O drivers.

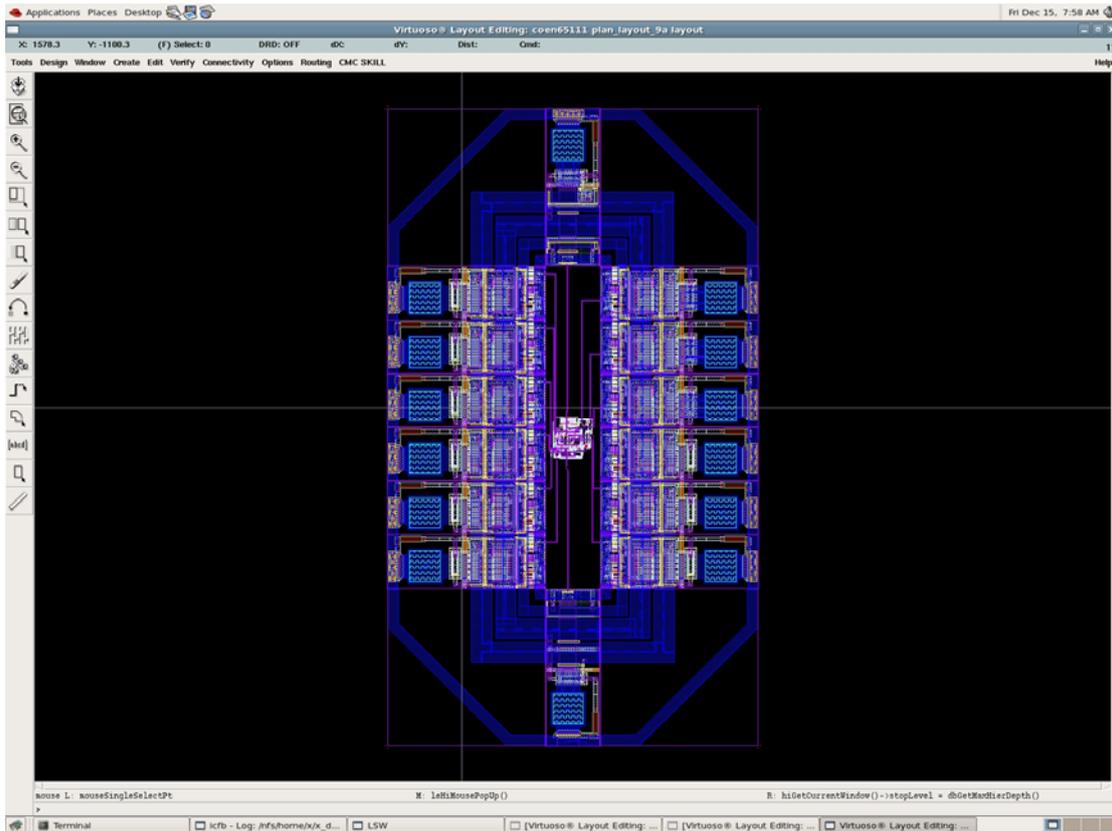


Figure 5.2 the whole circuit layout

The Pins are defined as figure 5.3 and table 5.1

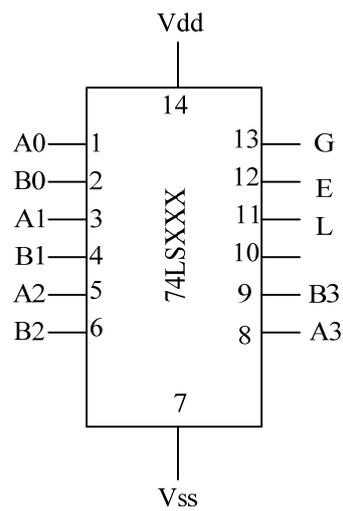


Figure 5.3 Pins define

Table 5.1

Pin Number	Signal	Input	Output	VDD	VSS(GND)
1	A0	✓			
2	B0	✓			
3	A1	✓			
4	B1	✓			
5	A2	✓			
6	B2	✓			
7	VSS				✓
8	A3	✓			
9	B3	✓			
10	IDLE				
11	L		✓		
12	E		✓		
13	G		✓		
14	VDD			✓	

6 Summary

From the logic design, schematic level design and simulation, layout, re-simulation and packaging, it is clear that the logic design is correct and simple to implement. According to the basic principles of CMOS circuit design, the appropriate parameters can be decided after several attempts to get better performance during the course of the circuit schematic design. Guided by the schematic design and CMOSIS5 design Rules, the layout can be obtained after the rational arrangement of all parts of circuit. And re-simulating the extracted circuit after layout extraction, we attained the values of t_d , t_{plh} , t_{phl} , area, power dissipation and other performance parameters closer to the real application.

The difference between the results from circuit design simulation and layout simulation provides us specific clues for improving the layout and at the same time, we must see that the layout is closer to real IC. For the practical application, some effects will be unavoidable, which is different from the circuit design simulation. Ordinarily, the time performance parameters from layout simulation are always greater than those from circuit design simulation. Another experience for layout is that the locally reasonable arrangement is not equal to the wholly reasonable arrangement and the wholly reasonable arrangement will be more significant for the design of large-scaled IC design.

In general, we have learned many CMOS digital integrated circuits analysis methods and design techniques.

We sincerely express our appreciation for our respectful tutor Dr. A.J.AL-Khalili.

7 References

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