

QUICK START GUIDE

Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB

Ultra-low Power Apollo SoC Family

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1. Introduction

This document provides guidance for setting up the Apollo4 Blue Lite Evaluation Board (EVB), part number AMA4BLEVB, to get started executing code examples, measuring power consumption in various configurations, and beginning software development.

FCC Regulatory Notice

This kit has not been authorized under the rules of the FCC. It is designed to:

1. Allow product developers to evaluate electronic components, circuitry or software associated with the kit to determine whether to incorporate such items in a finished product.
2. Enable software developers to write software applications for use with the end product.

This kit is not a finished product and may not be resold or otherwise marketed unless all required FCC authorizations are first obtained. **Developers using this reference design in their product are responsible for obtaining all required FCC equipment authorizations.**

Operation of this kit is subject to the condition that it does not cause harmful interference to licensed radio stations and that it accepts any harmful interference received. Unless the assembled kit is designed to operate under part 15, part 18, or part 95 of 47 CFR Chapter I - FCC, the operator of the kit must operate under the authority of an FCC license holder or must secure an experimental authorization under part 5 of the latter chapter.

2. Document Revision History

Rev #	Date	Description
1.0	Jul 2023	Document initial public release, board version 1
1.1	Mar 2024	- Notification added about SWO output enabled for the Ambiq Secure Bootloader. - Replaced J2 figure (Figure 9)
1.2	Jul 2024	FCC regulatory statement added/amended.
1.3	Dec 2025	Added important note about installing the Segger J-Link software in Software Development Tools section.

Table 1: Document Revision History

3. Reference Documents and Software

The following items, which can be downloaded from the Apollo4 Blue Lite Product Page link on <https://ambiq.com/>, may be useful in understanding and using the EVB.

- EVB Schematic
- Apollo4 Blue Lite Datasheet
- Apollo4 Family Programmer's Guide
- Apollo4 Lite/Blue Lite Errata List
- AmbiqSuite SDK

4. Quick Start

The EVB Kit comes with the following items:

- Apollo4 Blue Lite Evaluation Board (EVB)
- USB Type C cable
- Four adhesive-backed rubber feet
- Extra jumpers

Caution: The EVB has components loaded on the back of the board. Care should be taken to not damage these components. The included rubber feet should be applied to the bottom of the board to prevent direct contact between the components and a desk surface.

The EVB comes with jumpers pre-configured for default operation. Also, it has been pre-programmed with the Binary Counter example program. To start EVB program execution, connect the USB-C cable from a USB port on a PC to the J-Link USB connector (J6) on the EVB, and turn on the power switch (SW4). The blue LED next to the USB C port should illuminate.

Monitor the three LEDs on the EVB (D3-D5). The LEDs should light in a binary count-up pattern, and repeat.

The AmbiqSuite SDK provides many example programs that may be run on the EVB. To run these examples, download the SDK via the link provided above and select any of the pre-built examples in the SDK at `/boards/apollo4l_blue_evb/examples`.

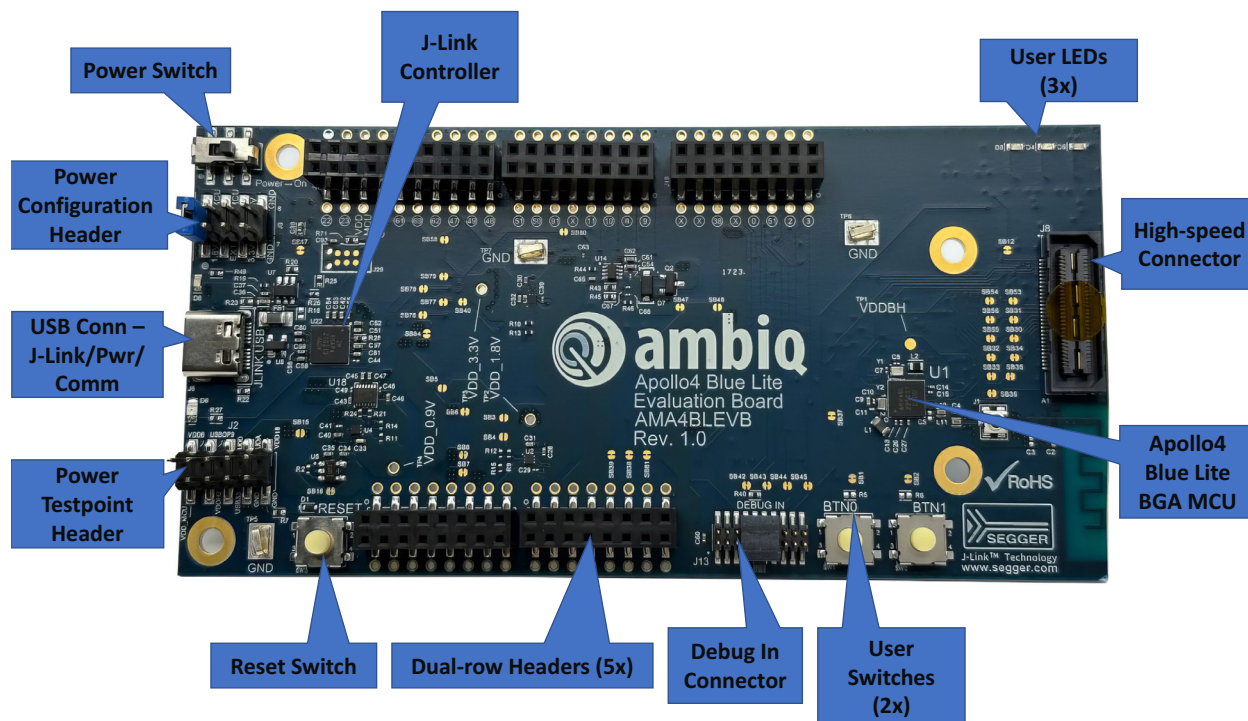


Figure 3. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB - Major Components

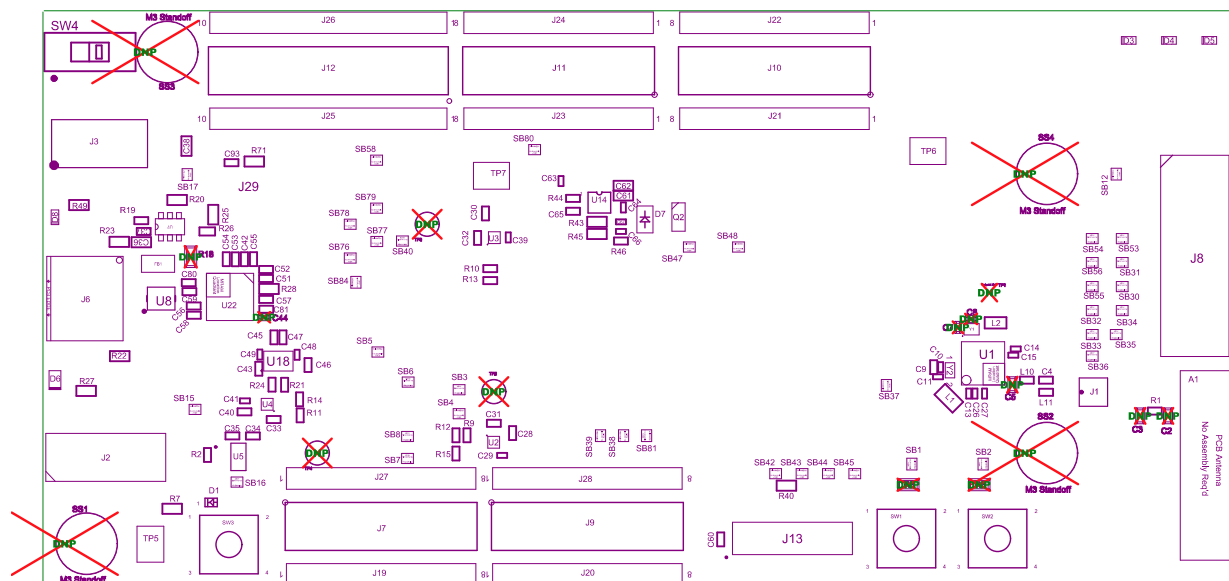


Figure 4. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB - Top Side Parts Location

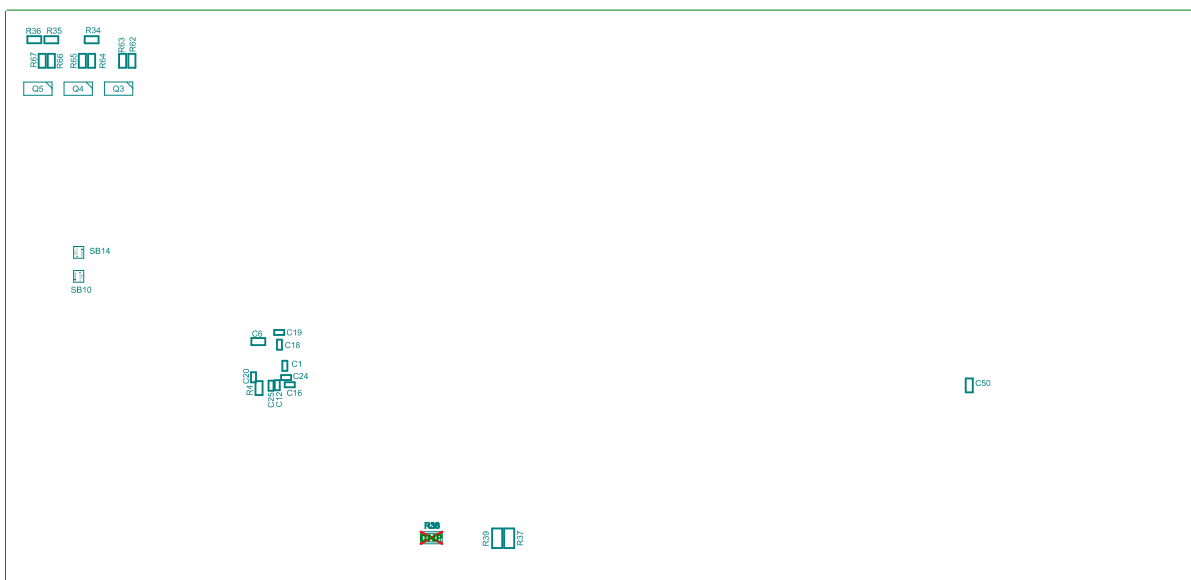


Figure 5. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB - Bottom Side Parts Location

The EVB has these features:

- Apollo4 Blue Lite SoC in the BGA package (AMA4B2KL-KXR)
- Low power reference design
- Multiple power/clock options
- USB connector for power/download/debug
- Segger J-Link debugger
- Debugger-in port (J13) (SWD or ETM)
- Three user-controlled LEDs
- Two push buttons for application use, plus a reset push button
- Power slide switch with LED power indicator
- Five headers (J7, J9-J12) for pin/power access to a shield board
- Test points for power measurements
- High-speed connector (J8 - QSH-030-01-L-D-A) for interfacing to displays and/or high-speed memory
- RF switch/connector (Murata MM8430-2610RA1) for BLE PHY testing
- Multiple solder-bridge options for power supply flexibility and peripheral access options
- RoHS compliant

CAUTION: The EVB has components loaded on the back of the board. Care should be taken to not damage these components.

5.1 Secure Boot on the Apollo4 Blue Lite SoC

Apollo4 Blue Lite SoC parts from the Ambiq factory are preprogrammed with a Secure Bootloader and an uninitialized Customer Info Space, referred to as INFO0. Initial provisioning of the part would include programming a valid INFO0 and programming the main firmware image in the flash. The Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB is shipped with the INFO0 configuration pre-programmed with optimal settings for the EVB layout:

1. Default boot to non-secure mode
2. Enable Boot Override to Push Button on GPIO18 (OTP setting) - BTN0/SW1.
3. Enable wired updates over UART2
 - A. UART2 is mapped to J-Link (OTP Setting).

- B. Baud rate is 115200 bps, no-parity, 8-bit data length, no flow control.
- C. Timeout is 3 seconds.

For reference, the following settings are programmed into INFO0 on the Apollo4 Blue Lite SoC resident on the EVB:

- SIMO Buck is NOT enabled.
- Secure Bootloader (SBL) interface is configured to UART using GPIO11 and GPIO13, which allows secure boot to be performed over the J-Link COM interface of the EVB.
- SBL override pin is configured to GPIO18 which is BTN0/SW1 on the EVB.
- All Flash and Debugger protection features are disabled.

For information on changing the INFO0 settings as well as using the Secure Bootloader, please refer to the *README.txt* file, which can be found in the tools\apollo4l_scripts folder of the latest SDK release supporting the Apollo4 family. This folder contains a number of python scripts to demonstrate generation of INFO0 settings, customer main images, and the creation of images for the Wired Update protocol over UART.

6. Debug Interface

Figure 6 shows the Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB set up for standard debug using the on-board J-Link debugger and on-board power supply. The on-board J-Link debugger is not shown in the figure.

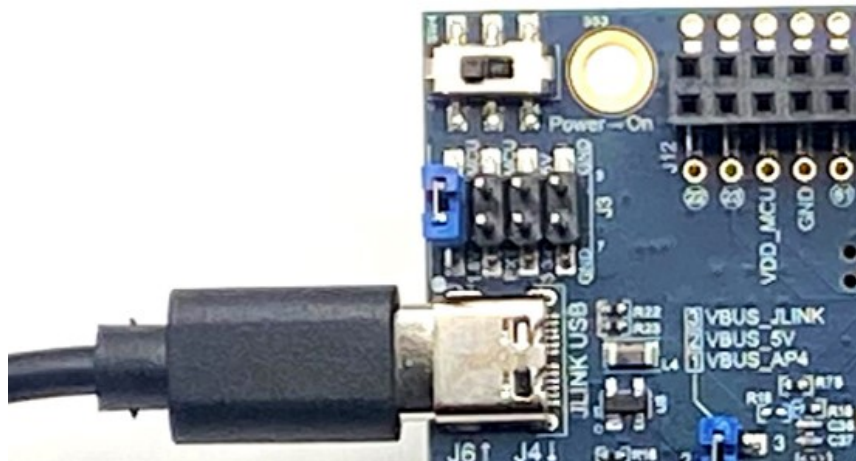


Figure 6. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB Using On-board J-Link Debugger

The debug interface is supported by standard J-Link drivers from Segger. Please refer to “Software Development Tools” on page 13 for more details on J-Link debug support.

6.1 Use of External Debugger

This EVB also supports the use of an external Cortex SWD debug interface through a 20-pin debug header (DEBUG IN - J13) as shown in Figure 7. See the EVB schematic for connector pinout.

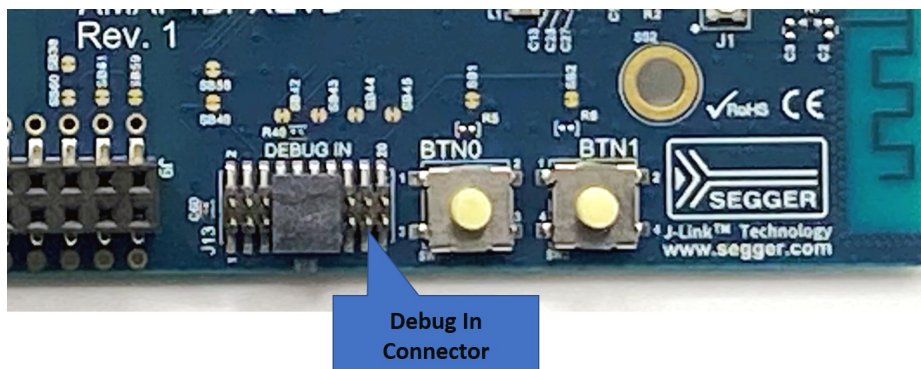


Figure 7. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB's DEBUG IN Header (J13)

No jumper changes are required to use an external debug adapter. Simply connect the external debug adapter with a ribbon cable connector to the “DEBUG IN” header.

NOTE: Remove protective guard before attempting to connect to the DEBUG IN header.

7. Software Development Tools

The standard Segger J-Link debug interface is used on the Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB. Please install the latest Segger J-Link software, and configure your preferred development IDE (Keil, IAR, or Eclipse) to use the J-Link debug interface. Please consult the release notes of the latest/applicable SDK release for the version of the tools used during testing of the SDK and which are recommended for development with the SDK.

Links to the supported development tools are listed below.

- SEGGER J-Link Software: <https://www.segger.com/downloads/jlink>
- KEIL uVision 5 (ARM Compiler 5): <https://www.keil.com/demo/eval/arm.htm>
- Latest Keil Pack (CMSIS Ambiq Pack): <http://www.keil.com/dd2/pack/#/third-party-download-dialog>
- IAR IDE/Compiler: <https://www.iar.com/iar-embedded-workbench/tools-for-arm/arm-cortex-m-edition/>
- GCC (GNU Arm Embedded Toolchain): <https://gcc.gnu.org>

Regardless of IDE used, please install the Segger J-Link software. All of the above development environments support J-Link, but you must have the latest J-Link software installed. Most alternate development environments also support J-Link.

Please refer to the AmbiqSuite SDK Getting Started Guide for more details on setting up development IDEs to use J-Link.

IMPORTANT NOTE

When installing the Segger J-Link software described above, it may be necessary to select the “Install Legacy USB Driver” option in order to properly enable the USB connection. This option is not selected by default in the Segger installation setup dialog box, so the checkbox has to be checked to install the legacy USB driver. (This is the only default installation option that needs to be changed when installing the software.)

8. Power Supply Options and Measuring Current

The Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB is intended to operate off of a 5 V supply, which is used to generate downstream voltages.

There are two power supply options for the EVB SoC:

- Operate at 1.9 V by default as provided by the on-board power supply (referred to as nominal “VDD_1.8V”). This can be adjusted to 1.8 V by shorting SB4 shown on the Power Supplies page of the EVB schematic⁽¹⁾.
- Provide externally supplied power.

The EVB utilizes solder-bridges for connecting and disconnecting rails from power supplies, whether generated on-board or off-board. Figure 8 shows the solder-bridge connection strategy between various on-board power supplies and the SoC's power rails.

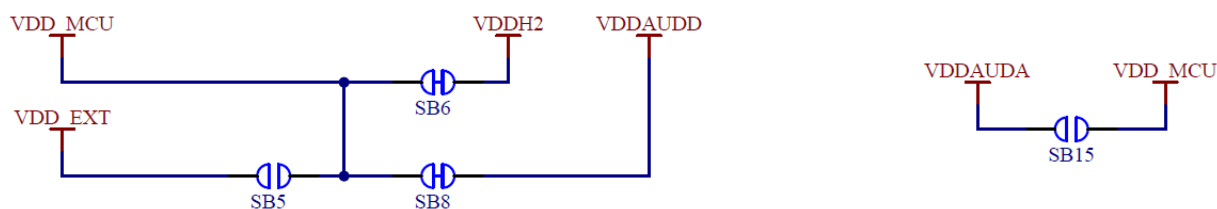


Figure 8. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB Power Supplies Solder Bridge Connection

As shown in the following figures, headers J2 and J3 provide easy access to the various system and chip-level power supplies present on the EVB. These can be used in conjunction with the above solder-bridges to measure current, monitor voltage, or provide externally generated power to each specific rail.

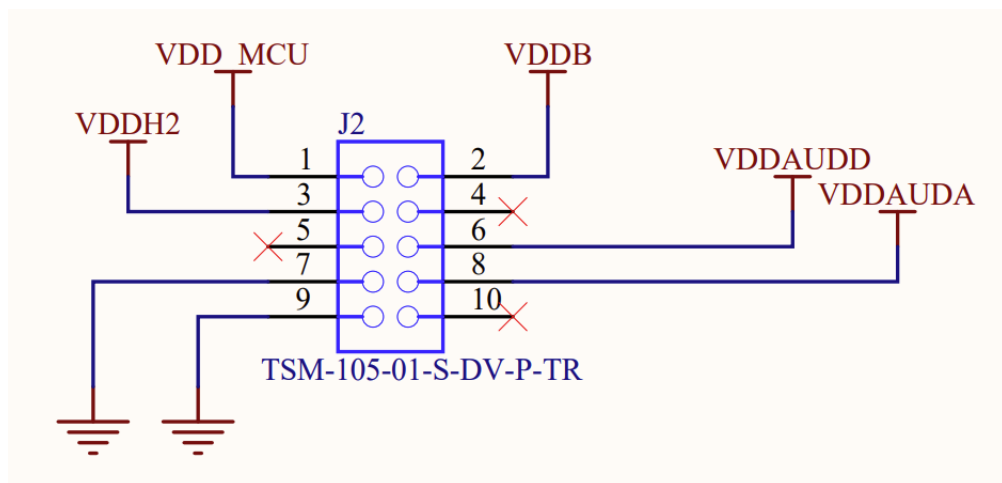


Figure 9. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB Voltage Test Points on Header J2

1. Refer to the EVB schematic and assembly drawing for purpose and location of all solder bridges on the EVB.

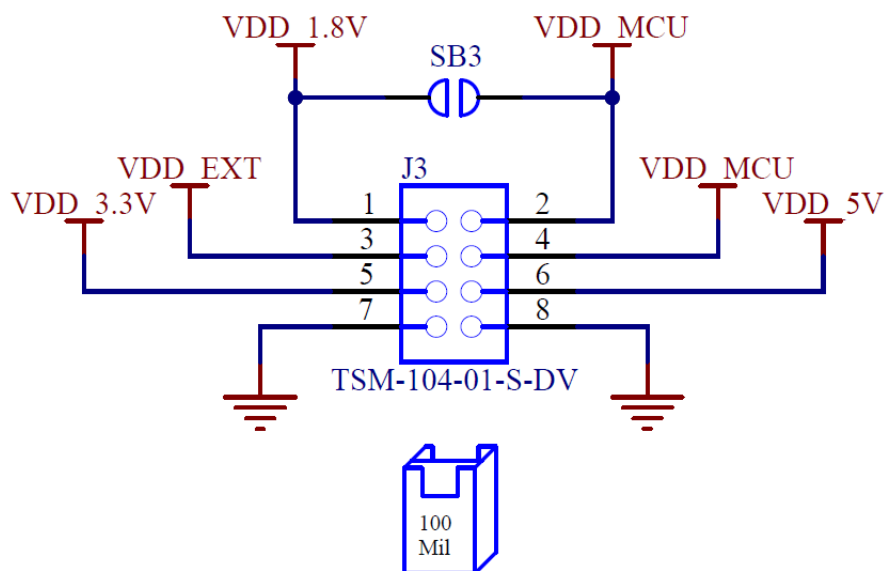


Figure 10. Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB Voltage Selection on Header J3

8.1 Measuring Current

If the user wants to use a separate power supply for the EVB, then either SB5 should be shorted or pins 3 and 4 of J3 should be jumped. The external power rail can be applied to VDD_EXT on J3, pin 3. Consult the electrical specifications in the Apollo4 Blue Lite Datasheet for the acceptable operating range for VDD_MCU.

Current consumption of the Apollo4 Blue Lite can be measured by connecting an ammeter between pins 1 and 2 of J3.

Use of the EVB using the on-board SoC supply may be restored by disconnecting the external supply (if connected) and either shorting SB3 or jumping between pins 1 and 2 of J3.

9. Non-Power Solder Bridges

9.1 Solder Bridges for Reducing Trace Length to Optimize Performance

The following peripherals support solder-bridge connections, which allow for optimized performance by reducing overall trace length at the cost of losing connectivity to their respective GPIO headers. Note that these connections can be reset by applying solder across the solder-bridge.

Peripheral	GPIO	Description
Display Controller, MSPI0	37, 64-73	Opening the following corresponding solder-bridges shown in Figure 4 connects these GPIO exclusively to J8, with minimal trace stubs: SB36, SB56, SB55, SB30 - SB35, SB53, SB54.
ETM	0-3, 83	Opening the following corresponding solder-bridges shown in Figure 4 connect these GPIO exclusively to J13: SB42 - SB46, SB10. SWO is default connection to J13.

Table 2: Peripherals Supporting Solder Bridge Connections

Additionally, the LED indicators can be disconnected from GPIO12, GPIO15 and GPIO16 by opening their respective solder-bridges (SB37, SB38, and SB39). GPIO11 and GPIO13 are used for UART communication with the on-board J-Link. Opening SB80 and SB81 frees these pins for exclusive use with the standard GPIO headers J10 and J12.

9.2 Optional SWO Output

In EVB revision 1.1, a zero ohm resistor has been added between GPIO24 (M7MISO_SWO_RTS01_GP24) and the existing SWO output pin, GPIO22 (M7SCL_M7SCK_SWO_RX01_GP22), which is then fed out to J13-6 on the EVB. This enables the SWO output during the execution of the Ambiq Secure Bootloader. To disable this feature, the resistor can be removed and GPIO 22 can be used for other purposes such as the SCL or SCK function for IOM7.

10. Ordering Information

Device Name	Orderable Part Number	EVB Revision	SoC	SoC Package	Temperature Range
Apollo4 Blue Lite EVB	AMA4BLEVB	1	Apollo4 Blue Lite	131-pin BGA	–20 to 60°C

Table 3: EVB Ordering Information

Device Name	Orderable Part Number	MRAM	RAM	Package	Packing	Temperature Range
Apollo4 Blue Lite SoC	AMA4B2KL-KXR	2 MB	1.375 MB	4.7 x 4.7 131-pin BGA	Tape and Reel	–20 to 60°C

Table 4: SoC Ordering Information



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