



Holden engine made a big difference compared to existing Rover V8s.

the broader and taller Australian unit was needed, while a bespoke manifold and exhaust system completed the engine swap.

The result was remarkable – a fire-breathing monster that could hit 185mph. And despite the heavy prototype body, its acceleration was astonishing. The Holden engine's torque curve was a revelation and the powerplant appeared to tick all the boxes – apart from one...

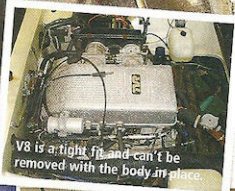
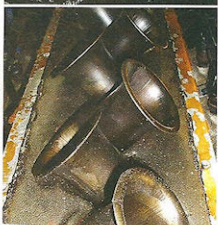
Parading this new and exciting prototype around the TVR dealer network, much of the feedback centred around two points. Firstly, if they were struggling with supply of engines and parts from Rover in Coventry, a mere two hours' drive away, how were they going to guarantee supply of similar materials from the other side of the world? Secondly, it was respectfully pointed out that while the prototype was striking and reasonably streamlined, it was still a reworked Tasmin – too boxy and angular, and not modern enough for the next generation



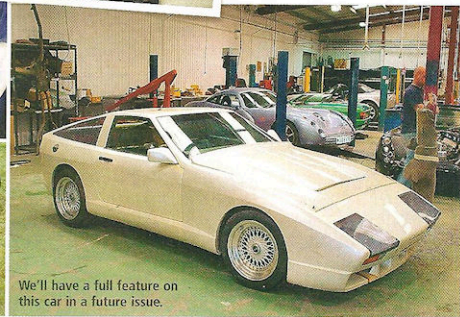
Engine parts will be polished.



Rolling chassis completed.



V8 is a tight fit and can't be removed with the body in place.



We'll have a full feature on this car in a future issue.

of TVRs. It really was a bit of a 'white elephant'. And that was the name that stuck.

Start again

The design team decided to take a fresh approach. Sometime later, a Rover-powered V8 S-series car had its body removed and an all-new shell created. Popular legend has it that Peter Wheeler worked on one side of the model while John Ravenscroft, TVR's chief designer, worked on the other. The result was two new models – the Griffith and the Chimaera, cars that paid TVR's bills for the next decade or so.

As for the White Elephant, after a year or two touring the country it returned to Blackpool to be used as the factory hack before being abandoned behind the factory and left in the open, which is where we started.

With several industry stalwarts assisting in the project, Howard's intensive nut-and-bolt restoration is due to be completed this summer. You can keep up to date with progress at www.tvrwhiteelephant.co.uk, and we'll be featuring the car in full once it's finished. So, for now, watch this space...

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