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A NEGLECTED TVR PROTOTYPE IS BEING BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE.



White Elephant was intended to be TVR's road car for the 1980s.

TVR's White Elephant

It might not have made it into production, but this forgotten TVR is coming back to life.

Words: Emma Merwood, Footman James Pics: Howard Bryan

Just a week before Peter Wheeler sold TVR to Nikolai Smolenski, marque enthusiast Howard Bryan finally got his hands on this one-off prototype. After much careful negotiation, the 'White Elephant' was rescued from the back of the TVR factory, where it had been lying forgotten since the mid-1990s.

The rear window had been borrowed for a customer repair and the bonnet was somehow wedged under the front of the car. The result was a sad and neglected old TVR, with grass growing out of the carpet and a three-foot tree emerging from the lake in the boot.

But Howard knew the history of the car and that it was worth saving. Towards the end of the 1980s, TVR were manufacturing the S-series and the Tasmin, with their characteristic pop-up headlamps and wedge-shaped body. With both models fast becoming outdated, the development team set out in search of the next big thing.

The S-series was to be used as the base for the factory's own Tuscan Challenge race car, so it was decided that the Tasmin would be a good base for the new roadgoing model. A fixed-head Tasmin was stripped of all its outer panels, and the entire bodyshell was sprayed with a



Heavy bodywork needs lots of helpers to move it around.