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MG Electric Vehicle Concept car – on the road

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An electrically powered MG? Certainly! Kim Henson reports.



Smart, stylish, and state of the art - the MG 'Electric Vehicle Concept' car.

During a recent, fascinating tour of MG's assembly plant and Technical Centre at Longbridge, Birmingham (to read about this, please click [HERE](#)), I was given the chance to test-drive a prototype of MG's 'EV (Electric Vehicle) Concept' car.

This is a small, electrically-powered, front wheel drive four seater, built on a purpose-designed, in-house platform (based on the Chinese market Roewe E50), and designed to be fun to drive, affordable to buy



and to run, practical and environmentally-friendly. As with the MG3 and MG6, much of the development work for this electric vehicle has been undertaken in the UK.

At the moment the car is undergoing extensive evaluation in China (where approximately 1,000 examples are already in use; the companies running them are providing valuable feedback) and in Britain.

This externally compact vehicle is powered by a 52Kw electric motor, delivering a useful 155 Nm of torque (over 114 lb.ft) and propelling the car to 50 kph (around 30 mph) in just over five seconds.

The car features two charging points (at the front, and on one side). For this vehicle when 'production' form, it is likely that there will be three ways in which the on-board propulsion battery can be charged (there's an additional 12 volt auxiliary battery for 'safety' systems). 'Standard' mode charging will take about six hours to achieve full charge. Alternatively, a 'Fast Charge' route will provide 80 to 90 per cent of full charge in three hours, or a 'Rapid Charge' will give up to 80 per cent of full power in just 30 minutes.

While driving, regeneration takes place when 'overrun'/deceleration is occurring, to help extend the available range between recharges from an external power source.



Distinctive frontal styling for the 'EV Concept'.



The charging point at the front of this electrically-powered MG is concealed by the flap which bears the 'MG' badge.



The charging apparatus is stored in its own compartment beneath the normal boot's floor, at the back of the vehicle.



The instrument panel is easy to assimilate and informs the driver of whether the car is using power or is in 'regeneration' mode.

Easy to assimilate instrumentation keeps the driver fully informed regarding the state of battery charge, regeneration activity, and so on.

With a total of four adults on board, I drove the test vehicle out of the Birmingham area on urban and country roads, and we were all extremely impressed (by the standard of fit and finish of the prototype, as well as its performance).

The MG proved to be very easy to operate (just like a normal automatic in terms of transmission selection), lively, and despite compact dimensions, it accommodated all four of us with relative ease.



It pulled away rapidly and near-silently from a standstill, and climbed with ease all the gradients we could find. Cruising at higher speeds on dual carriageways was hushed and enjoyable too.



Plenty of room in the front of this MG.



For rear seat occupants, there is much more space than might be imagined.



With four people aboard, boot space isn't enormous, but it will accommodate a number of small bags.



With only two people on board, the backrests of both rear seats can be folded forwards to provide more generous space for luggage.

There is a small luggage boot for use when all four seats were occupied, in addition to which



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the rear seat backs (divided 50:50) fold forwards to extend the available luggage space, if the car doesn't have a full complement of passengers on board.

The car is said to have an operating range of approximately 60 miles (a conservative figure, and enough for the commuting requirements of many), and to be capable of over 80 mph.

No news yet on possible production dates or pricing, but watch this space; before too long this innovative and likeable MG could be appearing on a street near you...