# More automotive good news for Wales? Watch this space…

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Another radical new British sports car could be built in South Wales after last week's announcement of the Aston Martin DBX

Robin Roberts (Editor, Wheels Within Wales Automotive news & features http://www.wheelswithinwales.uk) reports...

Legendary TVR confirmed it was looking at future production sites in South Wales for its new range of ground-breaking sports cars which use F1 type lightweight carbon fibre chassis and bodies (please see image above). They would be built on the patented i-stream system developed over 15-years by McLaren's leading engineer and designer Gordon Murray and which is said to be far cheaper for manufacturing.

It needs less assembly space, shorter build times and is highly adaptable, as well as being lighter and more fuel efficient, and it's won international awards and funding.

Last year, Gordon Murray Design and TVR Automotive signed a development agreement for

a new range of sports cars and at the time it was said they aimed for production from 2017, the 70thanniversary of TVR, but did not say where they would be built.

TVR has attended automotive industry events in Wales and executives frequently travel to the area to look at possible sites and meet Welsh Government officials.Yesterday, TVR said they hoped to make an announcement in a few weeks but there was no comment from Welsh Government on media reports that Wales had been chosen.Those reports suggested a site near Aston Martin's new St Athan assembly base for the DBX electric supercar.TVR has said their new car would use a 5.0 litre V8 petrol engine, tuned by Cosworth and mated to a conventional manual transmission with rear wheel drive – the powertrain layout of all their sports cars to date.A price guide of £55,000 has been given, but it's likely to be more than that when production begins.

Gordon Murray Design has produced an electric version of its i-stream projects and that will also be of interest to the Welsh Government, particularly after the deal to build the £160,000 DBX in St Athan from 2019 and create 750 jobs.The number of jobs likely to be created by the TVR Automotive investment is unknown.

## *TVR History*

TVR was founded in Blackpool in 1947 by Trevor Wilkinson, who left in 1962.Martin Lilley took over until 1981 and then a charismatic Peter Wheeler steered the group and its new range of beefy British sports cars with big engines and lightweight bodies.

His obsession was legendary in the industry but the cost base was unsustainable and it packed up in 2004.Russian Nikolay Smolensky acquired it but never developed the brand when the recession hit. In 2013 a British syndicate led by Les Edgar bought it (based in Guildford, close to Gordon Murray Design) and announced a ten-year development plan (please see image below).

