

## The Third Generation BMW X5

THE BMW X5 now enters its third generation, offering the choice of two or four wheel drive and is more luxurious than ever.

Accounting for 40% of sales in the X line-up the X5 now features more aggressive styling and higher equipment levels than the outgoing model.

The prediction by BMW is that 80% of sales will go to M Sport versions; already this option has proved extremely popular throughout the company's range of vehicles.

In order to get the feel and to be reacquainted with the X5 I did several miles behind the wheel of a top of the range version and then over an off road route in the

Goodwood Estate I was able to explore first hand the qualities of this very stylish vehicle when the going gets tough.

However I feel that most who purchase the new X5 will never put it through the paces which I did off road and rather it will be favoured greatly should we face another tough winter.

The first X5 was launched in 1999 and I can recall visiting the factory in South Carolina where I also had the opportunity to take the wheel of a vehicle which created the SAV (Sports Activity Vehicle) sector of the market

and it has gone on to become a global best seller, the second generation model arrived in 2007. Sales of the latest commence on 16 November.

High quality drive credentials, equipment levels and comfort continue to keep this BMW vehicle top of many shopping lists and by further extending its appeal I have no doubt that it will conquest further in the marketplace.

Providing the power, five TwinPower Turbo engines, four diesel and one Petrol, a standard eight-speed automatic transmission and the option of two or four-wheel drive and two trim levels will be available in our market, SE and M Sport.

The range will initially be made up of the xDrive30d, M50d and xDrive50i, my drive opportunity was with the impressive M50d.

Delivering the power for this version a three-stage single turbo version of the three litre six-cylinder engine which is 12 per cent more efficient. Consumption is reduced by 4.5mpg and CO2 emissions down by 22g/km, while maintaining its high power and torque outputs.

The X5 is equipped as standard with



ECO PRO, Auto Start-Stop, Brake Energy Regeneration, on-demand use of auxiliary units, electric power steering and low rolling resistance tyres.

Drive Dynamic Control allows you to fine-tune the balance between comfort and



sportiness on and off-road and the Driving Experience Control switch adjusts accelerator response, the characteristics of the power-assisted steering, automatic transmission shifting and depending on the choice of suspension, damping qualities and roll stabilisation.

It is mounted in the centre console. In addition, there is a choice of four suspension packages to provide the ultimate in personalisation.

Adaptive M Suspension is standard with the M Sport package and includes SPORT and SPORT+ modes for drivers who enjoy a more dynamic driving style.

Certainly when it comes to

performance the version I tried was certainly not lacking.

In keeping with BMW standards the newcomer is extremely well appointed with an air of luxury and ease of use and on the practical side there is a seven seater option and load carrying capacity has been increased to a maximum of 1,870 litres.

Prices start at £45,290 and in the first full year BMW expect to sell some 6,000.

Ian Lynas