

Jaguar XF Sportbrake 2.2 Diesel

By Jim Mc Cauley

When Jaguar launched the XF saloon in 2008, it introduced an assertive new grille and front end detailing that was to spawn into other model ranges. While the saloon provided 5-seater accommodation and a commodious 500 litre boot, there was talk of other derivatives to follow, with the estate variant the obvious move. Badged



Sportbrake, the estate introduces transmission improvements which are also shared with the 2013 saloon. Available in a choice of diesel and petrol engines, test choice was the higher output 2.2 litre diesel outputting 200PS, which replaces the previous 190PS unit.

Styling-wise the Sportbrake carries the same lines as the saloon, its steeply raked windscreen sitting at the same angle as the XK Coupé, adding a sense of urgency to the design, Chrome detailing rings the window area and visually extends the car although it still

sits within the 5 metre footprint of the saloon. Neat detailing includes the vented front wings and a leaping Jaguar emblem incorporated in the wrap-around tail-light units.

Inside, and there is no variation from the saloon with keyless ignition, pulsing start button and the theatrical opening of the air vents and rising of the gear selection disc. A dark finished cabin adds a sporting air with charcoal leather, carbon fibre veneer and dark suede headlining.

Fire up, and the muted revs make no suggestion of a diesel up front, and even the slick changes from the 8-speed auto 'box disguise the fact that there is a substantial 450 Nm of torque on tap, giving the car superb pulling power from its available 2,000 rpm. The performance return is a 0-60 mph time of 8.2 seconds and the potential to top 134 mph. Ride is well supported on the standard self-levelling air suspension of the Sportbrake and optional drive outputs are available by selection Sport or Winter modes. Additionally, the driver can override the automatic option by reverting to manual changes on the steering wheel paddles.

But the purpose of an estate is its additional load carrying capacity and within its elegant bodywork the XF Sportbrake can swallow over 1,600 litres. A twin rail system integrated into the luggage bay allows for the sliding of



retaining rails and movement of tie-down anchors to safely restrain delicate or heavy items.

Unlike many of its German competitors, the XF Sportbrake is top Portfolio trim leaves few options to add as it is comprehensively equipped. Electronic handling support



systems, leather trim, dual-zone automatic climate control, Bluetooth connectivity and satellite navigation are among the long list of standard equipment while desirable extras include a detachable tow-bar at £750 and blind spot monitor at £460.

On the economy and environmental fronts, the 200PS 2.2 diesel model tested has a quoted combined fuel consumption of 55.4 mpg and a CO2 emissions of 139 gms/km, putting it in band E for annual car tax. For business users, the car has a BIK rating in Year 1 of 21%.

While the diesel range opens at £31,940, the model tested in top Portfolio trim is listed at £44,690 and is in insurance group 40.