



The XK was axed in 2014 due to flagging sales



# Jag to revive spirit of XK with new 2+2 grand tourer

Design boss confirms plans for model to sit alongside next-generation F-Type

**A** Jaguar 2+2 sports car is back on the cards, and would sit alongside the brand's next-generation F-Type.

Jaguar design director Ian Callum told Autocar at Pebble Beach: "I want a two-seater [the F-Type] and a 2+2.

"We're working on something now. There's nothing approved, but we instigate in design - that's what we do."

Discussing the idea further at the Frankfurt motor show last month, Callum said he believed Jaguar could add

an XK-like model to its range and would "like to get back to both". To that end, Callum has some "quite different ideas... as to how to carry four people quickly around the world" with their luggage, suggesting if the XK were reborn, it would be as a true four-seat sporting grand tourer. The XK was discontinued in 2014 due to flagging sales. "The XK being dropped was much to my frustration," said Callum.

If a new 2+2 gets the go-ahead, it would be built alongside the next-generation F-Type at Jaguar's Castle

Bromwich plant. The car would use an updated version of the F-Type platform (which itself is a modified version of the original XK platform) and adopt Jaguar's Ingenium engines. These would include the entry-level four-cylinder 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol unit with 296bhp and the upcoming straight-six powertrains in various states of tune. The latter engines would replace the Ford-sourced V6s, as found in the current F-Type.

The model, which would not be introduced until at least

2021, would get hot iterations including an R and the range-topping SVR. The F-Type SVR uses a 5.0-litre V8 with 572bhp that hits 0-62mph in 3.7sec, although the extra weight of a four-seater would increase this time slightly.

Development of the second-generation F-Type, expected in 2019, is also under way, confirmed Callum.

He described the sports car market as "a fickle one" and said: "On the whole, market share is dropping all the time. That's why we keep to the high end with our sports cars."

When asked whether Jaguar would consider a partnership to make its sports cars more viable, in a similar way to BMW and Toyota with its respective Z4 and Supra models, Callum said: "I had a few ideas about partnerships but they didn't happen. Partnerships are the answer, I think. But we will be doing our own thing with the F-Type."

Callum added that the F-Type is fundamental to Jaguar. "It's the heart of the brand. I regularly have the conversation about how Jag



New four-seat sports GT would be based on the F-Type platform

needs a sports car, I mean, if it wasn't making money - and it does, by the way - it's what it's doing for the brand that matters. It's aspirational."

While Callum's hopes for an XK replacement continue, Jaguar did in fact design a next-generation XK that would be on sale now - had the success of the F-Type in the eyes of the marketing department not killed it.

Callum confirmed that having both an F-Type and an XK in the Jaguar range was "always the plan". He added: "The F-Type was never meant to kill the XK."

However, with design work on the XK complete, and the F-Type launched in 2013, Callum said marketers at Jaguar believed the XK was no longer needed. The F-Type, they thought, filled the role of a sporting, performance Jaguar in the range and engineering work on the XK never commenced.

**RACHEL BURGESS**

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**NEW XJ WILL REMAIN JAG'S FLAGSHIP MODEL**

The Jaguar XJ will retain its place as the range-topping model in Jaguar's line-up in its next generation, according to design boss Ian Callum.

Callum said there was now a "consensus" within the company that the XJ, rather than a large SUV, will remain the firm's flagship, even if

such a model does eventually appear. To that end, a 'J-Pace' model, to sit above the F-Pace in Jaguar's SUV range, is still expected, albeit with careful positioning.

"An SUV was discussed but it's not the mainstay of the brand," Callum told Autocar at the Frankfurt motor show.

"There's more sophistication for a flagship sedan than a flagship SUV. Only one brand can have an SUV as its flagship due to its origins and that's Land Rover."

Callum said the very idea of a saloon needed to be reinvented, following the rapid rise of the SUV, the

issue of electrification and the fact that markets such as North America have started taking to hatchbacks with the success of Tesla.

Jaguar will continue with SUVs, though, according to Callum, and ensure they are always "sporty ones". On the current XJ, Callum said its design remains popular because it is "different" to its rivals.

He added: "The coupé profile is something I obsessed over. Some people don't agree with it. Everything else is three-box; people simplify and categorise things. [If you do that], you lose the opportunity to define in your own way. The XJ covers that well."

Callum admitted the XJ was "a personal thing for me", and he saw it as "a fundamental part of Jaguar". He added: "It's there and it says what Jaguar is about."

