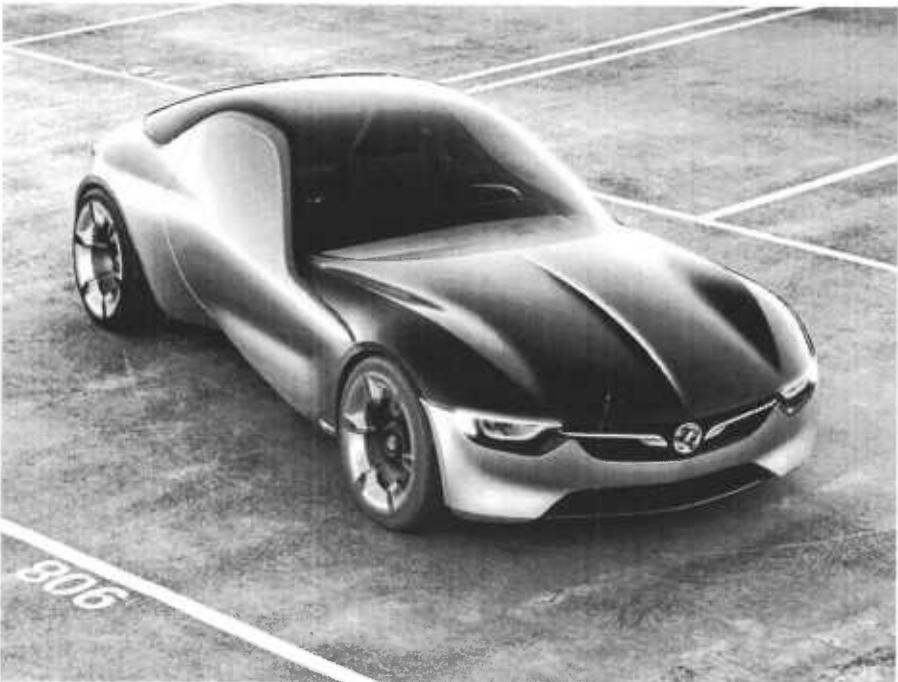


**ISSUE 169**



# ***Holden Business***

**March/April 2016**



## FRONT COVER – Holden built Opel GT concept

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EDITOR'S  
NOTES.

Hi all,

I hope some of you managed to get along to the Australia Day event at the Ace Café. I wasn't able to make it myself but if you do have any pictures I would be pleased to include some in the next edition of the magazine.

Talking of events, there are always a good selection over Easter and although there have been dire forecasts for a snow covered Easter, I am sure this is unlikely to involve the whole of the UK, so you should be able to get out and show off your cars.



A reminder that if you ever want to sell you Holden, or indeed, are looking for a new one, just send me the details and I will include them in the magazine and can also, if you wish, add them to our website, which receives hundreds of visits each day. This can also include sales and wants requests for spares. This service is free to our members.

Regards



Ken



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# Opel's Aussie-built GT

Holden-crafted concept set to fire up fresh push for global GM sportscar

By RON HAMMERTON

**OPEL'S** pocket-rocket GT sportscar concept has been revealed in images shot in Australia ahead of its public debut at the Geneva motor show next month.

The photographs – with a background featuring Melbourne's distinctive skyline, GM Holden's carpark and even part of the old Fishermens Bend factory – indicate the little 2+2 coupe was indeed fabricated at GM Australia Design's workshop, as GoAuto tipped last month.

Opel later confirmed that the concept had been built at Holden – one of just two fabrication workshops in the GM world capable of building such a rolling prototype.

In this case, the design was done in Germany by an Opel team led by GM vice-president of Design Europe, Mark Adams, before Holden took it to reality.

The front-engine, rear-wheel-drive coupe is, according to GM, a design study, with no firm plans for production. However, the company is not ruling out



a production version that – should it get the green light – almost certainly would be sold across GM sister brands Opel, Vauxhall, Buick and Holden.

It would follow in the wheel tracks of two previous Opel GTs, including the Kadett-based GT that was revealed in concept form at the 1965 Frankfurt motor show before going into production from 1968 to 1974.

Said Opel Group CEO Karl-Thomas Neumann: "We are taking the next step towards even more emotion and driving pleasure with the Opel GT concept."

"The GT concept shows what Opel stands for now. We are confident, ambitious, innovative and we want to win over more customers with every new car."

One thing is for certain: the Opel GT is not the V8-powered rear-wheel-drive sportscar promised to Holden fans by GM International president Stefan Jacoby.

Similar in size and weight to Alfa Romeo's 4C, the GT concept is powered by a diminutive 1.0-litre three-cylinder turbocharged engine lifted from small Opels such as the Adam, Corsa and Astra.



The engine – making 107kW of power and 205Nm of torque – is mounted under the bonnet but behind the front axle line for optimum centre of gravity.

Like a true sports coupe, the engine drives the rear axle via a six-speed sequential gearbox and mechanical diff lock. The transmission is operated by steering wheel shift paddles.

Weighing less than 1000kg, the GT concept is said to be capable of sprinting from 0-100km/h in less than eight seconds and on to a top speed of 215km/h.

**FULL STORY: [CLICK HERE](#)**

# Holden's secret concept

**Mystery Alpha concept was built at Holden but still under lock and key**

By RON HAMMERTON

A **SECRET** concept car called Alpha was prepared at General Motors Australia Design's skunkworks in Melbourne a few years ago but remains under wraps.

The name of the mystery vehicle came to light during a rare tour by journalists of the facility next to GM Holden's Australian headquarters at Fishermens Bend where the car was listed in a wall-mounted honour roll of the 30 or so concept and show vehicles built there since the current workshop was opened in 2003.

The Alpha name suggests a link with GM's Alpha rear-wheel-drive platform that underpins recent high-end performance and luxury cars such as the 2013 Cadillac ATS, 2014 Cadillac CTS



Buick Avenir concept in production at Holden

and 2016 Chevrolet Camaro.

The striking American-designed two-door Buick Avista concept coupe that won many hearts at this year's Detroit motor show is also said to have been built on the Alpha global platform developed in the United States.

GM Australia Design executives are tight-lipped about the Alpha concept, saying only that it was built for GM internal purposes and had not been shown publicly anywhere.

Apparently developed "a number of years ago", before GM's decision to shut Australian car manufacturing, the vehicle invites speculation that it might have been Holden's stillborn vision for a next-generation Commodore and related Chevrolet SS after the current range is retired in 2017, or perhaps an Australian pitch for the new-generation Camaro.

Interestingly, the Alpha vehicle appears to have been built by the Australian team in the high-security

centre immediately after it built the first draft of the award-winning Buick Avenir concept.

Originally simply called Flagship, as in Buick Flagship, the first version of this Australian-designed Avenir large sedan concept was built by the shortcut method of fibreglass panels.

That concept was shipped to Detroit where GM design vice-president Ed Welburn – who had commissioned the Avenir from the Australian design team – was so taken by it that he ordered a full-blown operational show car for display at the 2015 Detroit show.

That second Avenir was then fabricated in the Melbourne facility which is one of only two such workshops in the GM world that can build a driveable concept from the ground up. The other is in Detroit.



Avenir concept production

**FULL STORY: [CLICK HERE](#)**

# Holden plant bid fails

**Decision by GM, Punch to abandon rescue deal brings anger, confusion**

By IAN PORTER

**GENERAL** Motors has announced that the Punch Corporation proposal to keep Holden's assembly plant in Elizabeth, South Australia, in operation after production ceases in 2017 will not go ahead.

The failure of the proposal to progress has been met with scorn and scepticism by some government and industry figures.

A joint statement from GM Holden and Punch Corporation released late on Friday said the two companies undertook a "detailed global evaluation" of the proposal before determining it would not proceed.

"Both parties concluded that a viable business model was not possible for this case. Therefore, the proposal will not be taken forward," the statement read.

"The challenges to domestic automotive manufacturing in Australia – lack of scale, high production costs, supply base contraction and increasing



Elizabeth plant

market fragmentation – persist and cannot be overcome for this business case.

"In particular, the wind-down of the supply base following the manufacturing exit of the three existing car-makers, and the critical production mass they represent, is insurmountable.

"GM thanks Punch Corporation for their proposal. GM will continue to consider Punch Corporation, along with other interested parties, to participate in the sale process of the Elizabeth plant and assets after GM ceases local manufacturing.

"Punch Corporation will continue to pursue other business opportunities in the Australian automotive sector."

Both industry minister Christopher

Pyne and one of his predecessors, Senator Kim Carr, expressed doubt about the claim that GM and Punch had completed a "detailed global evaluation" of the proposal before pulling the pin, while the local parts industry was irate about being made the scapegoat for the decision.

"What I think about it isn't printable," Federation of Automotive Products Manufacturers (FAPM) manager Tom Chappell told GoAuto on Sunday night.

"They've got their own reasons for not doing it, but the supply chain is not one of them. I was pissed off when I read that."

**FULL STORY: [CLICK HERE](#)**

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I have been in the motor trade for close to 40 years, importing and exporting vehicles since 1985. Although I now think of myself as semi-retired I have a number of regular trade clients, and over recent years more and more private customers who through "word of mouth" or previous client referrals have sought my assistance. Their encouragement has convinced me that I should offer my knowledge and experience, through this service.

Although I'm happy to talk through the basics, this is small business offering a personal one to one service, so I cannot provide lengthy in depth phone advice. The easiest way to initially proceed is to scan and email copies of all available paperwork or send photocopies (not original documents) by post with your contact details. I can then give them a thorough read-through and get back to you with any further questions I have.



# Holden Legend. HQ Holden



Over 40 years have now passed since Holden changed the landscape of the Australian Automotive Industry with the release of the HQ Holden.

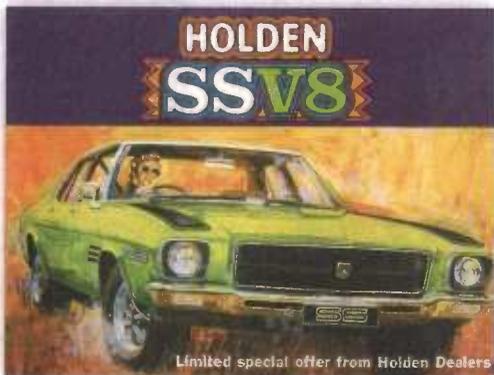
Taking over from the HG Series in 1971, the all-new HQ was praised for its advanced features and individual styling. It also represented a more sophisticated design direction while delivering the rugged durability and family-size roominess which Australian buyers had come to expect.

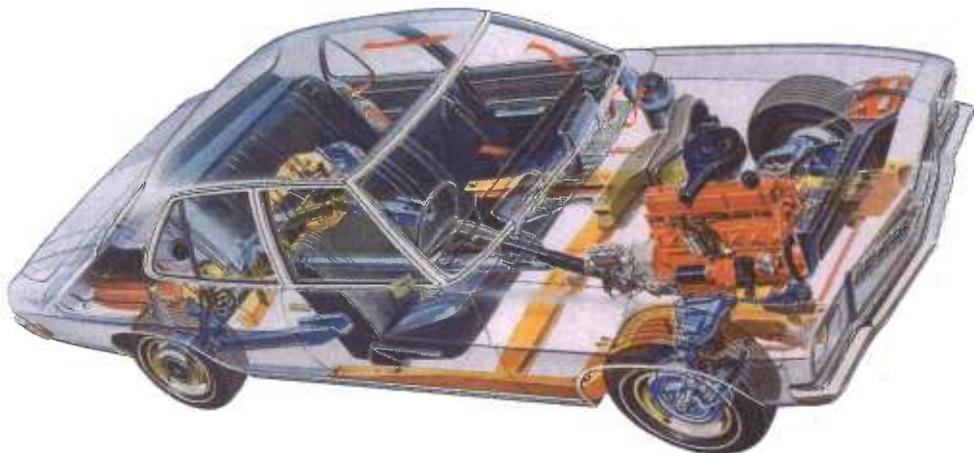
The Monocoque construction and all-new four-wheel coil spring suspension provided superior ride and handling for its day. Power was delivered through a choice of six and eight cylinder engines. The HQ's six-cylinder powerplants beefed up with increased capacities of 2.85 litres (173ci) and 3.3 litres (202ci). As well as the imported 5.7 Litre '350' Chevrolet engine, there were now two versions of the locally-built V8. There was the 4.2 litre '253' and the newly engineered 5.0 litre '308'. This same 5.0 litre V8 would continue to evolve and go on to power many more Holden's for almost the next 30 years.

Just like today's Holdens, the HQ brought with it industry-leading initiatives in automotive safety. Forward vision was increased considerably, courtesy of thinner front pillars. Thick padding was also incorporated into the dashboard and door curvature design to give increased passenger protection.

The new range consisted of 18 distinct model variants. The HQ, still to this day is Holden's best ever selling model, over a three-year production period, total sales of the much-loved car reached nearly half a million (485,650), this ensured that Holden's title as Australia's number one car manufacturer of the period remained beyond challenge.

The HQ introduced a range of all-new models that have been mainstays in Holden's stable ever since. For the first time, the model range included a long wheelbase derivative. The original Holden Statesman, with a





26-centimetre length advantage over other HQ sedans, featured a plush, roomy interior and two trim levels: Custom and DeVille.

The HQ range also marked the debut of Holden's first cab-chassis truck. Dubbed the 'One Tonne' for its payload capacity, it could be fitted with a number of factory or after market tray-backs, tip-backs or camper bodies.

Added to the range in 1972 was the sporty 'SS', the first Holden to wear the 'SS' badge. Aimed at the younger demographic, it was a four door V8 with a four-speed, console-mounted manual transmission, GTS instruments, steering wheel and guard vents, steel sports wheels and unique SS paint scheme.

Also in the range were the Belmont, Kingswood and Premier Sedans and wagons as well as the Monaro Coupe, GTS Coupe and LS Coupe. The commercial range also included style side utilities and panel vans.

The diverse range, rugged reliability and elegant styling set the HQ apart from everything else on the road in its day. It was designed and built by Australians, for Australians. Today, most people would have a story about an HQ Holden from one point in their lives. Whether it be the first time they saw one drive down the street, or that ever reliable car that still holds a special place in their heart. The HQ is arguably Australia's greatest car and will be forever etched into Australian History. Happy 40th Birthday to the HQ Holden!



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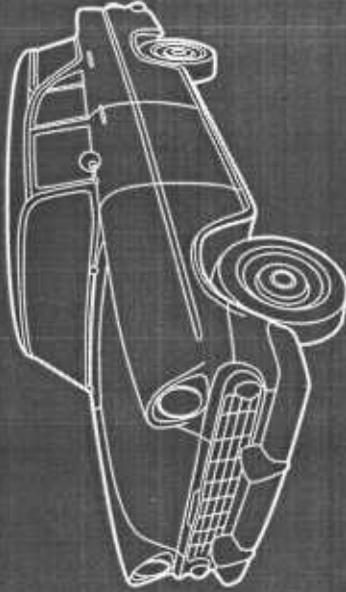
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