

Mercedes-Benz readying GLE replacement on new platform

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MHA architecture will underpin all future full-size SUVs and crossovers

Mercedes-Benz is testing prototypes of the next generation of its full-size GLE premium sport utility vehicle (SUV) which will be built on the brand new platform architecture for its largest SUVs, which will be known as the MHA platform according to an *Autocar* report. According to the report the prototype is being referred to by the codename W167, in line with Mercedes' traditional internal model

designation naming convention. The disguised prototype hints at radically different styling to the current model with a shorter front overhang, wider wheel arches and a sleeker basic profile. The new MHA architecture will underpin all the full-size SUVs and crossovers in the future, with everything larger than the GLC based on the architecture as part of the firm's move to four basic architectures.



Significance: The next model will have a longer wheel base than the current GLE, which is the company's alternative to the likes of the Range Rover Sport and the BMW X5, and which is its main full-size SUV offering. The currently model is seen as being slightly off the pace in terms of dynamics, design and desirability in comparison to its aforementioned rivals and the next generation will have to be a step change in terms of what the company is currently offering; given the new range of powertrains and architecture and likely departure in design strategy Mercedes-Benz is aware of this. The new model will sell a peak volume of 130,000 units by 2020 in comparison to the 161,000 units the X5 will sell during the same year.

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