

It all.....



adds up

Ian Lamming gets his head around the mathematics of the Nissan Qashqai

Fact File:

Nissan Qashqai
 Engine: 1.2 petrol
 Power: 113BHP
 0-62mph: 11.3
 Top speed: 114
 Combined miles per gallon: 50.4
 Transmission: six speed manual
 Insurance: NA
 CO2 g/km: 129

GOOD at maths and science, then look away because this doesn't make any sense.

New Qashqai is a pretty big car. The SUV is tall, wide and long. It's not overly heavy but it's obviously not a light-weight either.

So what would Nissan put under the bonnet? Perhaps a 2.0 litre petrol? How about a 1.6-2.0 litre turbo diesel? You'd think?

No Washington has flicked pea-like a teensy tiny tot of a motor under that large and generous bonnet, a 1.2 litre turbocharged four cylinder that started life in a Micra, for goodness sake, what is going on.

The figures continue not to add up. The motor-let squeezes out a modest 113BHP, which is about what you would expect from a blown 1.2 and maths and science tell you that surely to Jonny Ball that isn't enough power.

So climb inside, press the starter button and fire up the weed. Strangely the David and Goliath battle comes out in favour of the little guy. The torque kicks in, the turbo-boost pushes you in the back and you are off at a reasonable lick.

Surprising, pleasantly surprising.

And Qashqai does all of this without having to be flogged like a pit pony, which means that economy doesn't suffer.

Come the steep stuff it is necessary to drop down the box to stir the little mite into action but it is impressive the way it climbs through the Dales and plies the highways. The handling is competent too and the whole driving package is a decent enough experience.

New Qashqai looks really good with fresh lines and a more aggressive stance. It looks lower, wide and more stable than its predecessor. The front lights, with funky day-running LEDs, and grille are bolder and designed to give the Q more stage presence. The back is more memorable too, so the Nissan scores well in the looks department.

Nothing wrong with the interior either. It is spacious and appealing, well equipped and cheery. The stop/start doesn't work, but hey, how annoying is that particular piece of technology, so that's actually a bonus. The boot is big and has a useful basement under the floor for the dirties or the valuables, or cheese.

It's a competitive world and the SUV market is crowded.

Nissan kind of invented the current genre and as such was under a lot of pressure to produce something exceptional.

Look at the statistics and the Qashqai shouldn't work at all, let alone lead the field – but it just about adds up.