



in passenger cars, but until now it has not been favoured for SUVs, particularly the really serious heavy metal ones. More precise control over dynamics is an obvious benefit of the new body. And that creates the opportunity for another important step: a

move to independent suspension all round.

Such is the magnitude of this change for the Pajero that it's almost possible to overlook another important addition. A 3,2-litre turbocharged direct injection engine now tops the diesel

range, along with a high-tech five-speed automatic transmission. All the signs point to a renewed emphasis on refinement and on-road performance that would be acceptable to those more used to cars than to 4x4s.

In size and proportions, the

new vehicle follows the template laid down by the old. Most noticeable change is a front end that must be one of the most macho-looking on a standard SUV. Viewed from dead ahead, the Pajero seems massively wide across the torso, albeit