



Low kerb weight and
335kW in-line six
should make Z10
a 911 Turbo rival

ILLUSTRATIONS: HUCKFELDT/AUTOBILD



BMW Z10

**ECO
SUPERCAR**

Munich's twin-turbo, petrol-electric 911 hunter

IF THE supercar is to survive, it must evolve. Monstrous power and pace, with a thirst and belch to match, is fast becoming as politically correct as an unrestrained Gordon Ramsay rant. But BMW is hoping its stunning twin-turbo hybrid Z10 will prove that the terms 'eco' and 'supercar' can indeed coexist.

The climate for big-ticket, high-horsepower supercars is dire the world over. So dire, in fact, that BMW has already red-flagged several high-end projects (see breakout, right) including the ultra-lux CS sedan. By putting the CS on hold, BMW has saved around 500m Euros in R&D cash. The lion's share is being redirected to bread-and-butter models and fuel-sippers, but a small amount has been freed up

to keep this hardcore hybrid alive.

The production Z10 is unlikely to see daylight before 2014, but BMW will unveil a concept at September's Frankfurt Show that will preview many of the styling and technology cues of the road-going real thing. The show car is tipped to get a 55kW electric motor in each wheel hub and a 250kW twin-turbo four-cylinder petrol engine mounted amidships.

While the in-wheel electric motors and four-cylinder engine are unlikely to see production, the Z10 'eco-supercar' will adopt other elements of BMW's Efficient Dynamics program. As such, BMW's relatively thirsty twin-turbo V8 has been rejected in favour of the next-generation in-line six sporting twin-huffers. Reportedly good for

335kW/475Nm (and also destined in revised form for the next M3), this new powerplant will be hooked up to an eight-speed dual-clutch gearbox, with a compact hybrid drive module powered by a lithium-ion battery pack. The latter will be used for short-hop electric-only driving and boosting full-throttle acceleration.

The Z10 will be positioned above the M3, M5 and M6, with a brief to be more practical, more cutting edge and greener than Porsche's 911 Turbo. And despite a relatively lean development budget the Z10 will not cut corners in terms of its use of high-end tech. Senior sources tell us it will be built around an ultra-light, yet rigid carbonfibre monocoque tub with aluminium subframes front and

rear. All body panels are said to be made from either carbonfibre or aluminium, too, with the target weight set at just 1500kg. That's 85kg less than the 911 Turbo.

Sources tell us BMW is also banking on some headline-grabbing numbers, including a 0-100km/h sprint in under four seconds and a fuel consumption figure below 9.0L/100km.

BMW's top brass is desperate to live up to the company's 'Ultimate Driving Machine' catchcry while also pushing the boundaries of Efficient Dynamics. Question is, can the Z10 fit both bills yet still bloody the noses of key rivals such as the 911 Turbo? It's impossible to predict for certain, but if this is the future of supercars, just show us where to sign...