Musk drops the rockets to hitch ride on a sheep

Elon Musk is known for his interest in technology, space travel and driverless cars. He has not, until now, expressed much interest in sheep (Valentine Low writes).

Until Wednesday, that is, when the billionaire changed his Twitter profile picture to that of a particularly sturdy Exmoor Horn Ram.

The image was originally tweeted a year ago by the Museum of English Rural Life, a hitherto obscure branch of the University of Reading, with the memorable words: “Look at this absolute unit.”

The tweet quickly acquired a life of its own, which explains why, when posting an image of the world’s largest aircraft, the MIT Technology Review wrote:

“Look at the size of this absolute unit.”

After Musk replied with the original image, he was challenged to use the sheep as his profile picture. He did, only for the museum to respond in kind by adopting his picture, before asking the billionaire if he could send a sheep into orbit.

Adam Koszary, the museum’s head of social media, said it was “a little surreal” that the 1962 image from Devon would “one day become the profile picture of a multimillionaire who goes to space”.

Not that he minded, of course. “We are just happy that people are talking about this sheep again.”
The image of a huge ram won widespread media coverage last April (1), and caught Elon Musk's attention on Wednesday (2), resulting in a mutual appreciation pact (3).