

No: 6/88

Ref: EW/G88/04/12

Category: 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA38, G-BGRX

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-235-L2C piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1979

Date and Time (UTC): 23 April 1988 at 1015 hrs

Location: Leavesden Airport, near Watford, Herts

Type of Flight: Training

Persons on Board: Crew - 2 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Minor - to propeller and possible shock loading of engine

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence and Full Instructor's Rating

Commander's Age: 30 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 748 hours (of which 400 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the Instructor and telephone enquiry by AAIB

The aircraft, flown by the student pilot, had landed on runway 06. ATC asked for the aircraft to taxi onto the grass in front of the tower as there was another aircraft on finals. The aircraft left the runway to the left and taxied approximately 60 metres over the freshly cut grass towards the control tower. The student was asked to turn the aircraft to the left so that the landing aircraft would be in view. After travelling a further 2 metres in this direction, the nosewheel went into a 12 inch deep by 12 inch wide hole. The propeller struck the ground and stopped.

The occupants were uninjured, and after having switched off the fuel, ignition and electrics, vacated the aircraft. They report that the hole was not visible being filled with cut grass. The aircraft's nosewheel was extricated and the aircraft towed back to its base. The hole was then immediately filled in.

Movements on the grass either side of runway 06 have been stopped pending a policy decision by the airfield operator.