

Piper PA-24-260 B, G-BAHG

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/2002 **Ref:** EW/G2002/04/12 **Category:** 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-24-260 B, G-BAHG

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming IO-540-D4A5 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1965

Date & Time (UTC): 21 April 2002 at 1730 hrs

Location: Great Oakley, Essex

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Nose landing gear disrupted, bent propeller and dented engine cowling

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 50 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 298 hours (of which 35 were on type)
Last 90 days - 11 hours
Last 28 days - 11 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was returning from St Mawgan in Cornwall to Great Oakley in Essex on a Sunday evening. The flight was uneventful and on arrival at Great Oakley, the grass strip and taxiways were clearly visible with no other aircraft on the ground or in the air. The grass runway was orientated 04/22 with a slight down-slope on Runway 04. There was no significant weather with a surface wind of 130°/5 - 10 kt and visibility in excess of 10 km. With the prevailing wind across the runway, the pilot elected to land on Runway 04 in order to avoid landing into the low sun and also in order to minimise the noise disturbance to local residents created by flying a circuit to Runway 22. The pilot had landed on Runway 04 on a number of occasions previously, both in light wind

and cross-wind conditions, having completed the landing roll with adequate landing distance remaining.

Full flap was selected and the aircraft flown at the approach speed of 80 mph to a normal flare and touchdown at the intended point on the runway. The aircraft's response to braking appeared to be significantly less than usual on the dry grass runway but the pilot judged that adequate runway remained in which to stop. The aircraft continued along the runway with the speed reducing but it failed to stop before the end and overran by approximately three metres into an adjoining cropped field. As the aircraft crossed a furrow on the edge of the field at approximately 5 mph, the nose landing gear collapsed. After the aircraft stopped, the pilot and passenger vacated the aircraft through the normal exit.

The pilot concluded that on closer examination of the wind direction indicated by the wind sock, it showed an occasional variation in wind direction giving a slight tail wind component on Runway 04. From his observation of the windsock, it appeared that the crosswind was not of a magnitude to effect the landing. However, the use of Runway 22 with its marginal up-slope might have created visibility problems with the setting sun. Allied to this was his desire not to create noise and nuisance to the local residents. These factors influenced his decision to use Runway 04.