

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	P and M Aviation Quik GTR, G-HOTR	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912 ULS piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2012 (Serial no: 8617)	
Date & Time (UTC):	27 May 2013 at 0640 hrs	
Location:	Near Mevagissy, Cornwall	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - 1 (Minor)
Nature of Damage:	Damage to landing gear, propeller, wing and struts	
Commander's Licence:	National Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	48 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,082 hours (of which 36 were on type) Last 90 days - 68 hours Last 28 days - 37 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The microlight failed to gain height after taking off from a field site. With insufficient distance to abort the takeoff safely, the pilot attempted to gain airspeed to clear the boundary hedge. However, the main wheels caught in the hedge and the aircraft stalled, landing heavily in the field beyond. The pilot believed adverse local wind effects had played a part in the accident.

Description of the event

The pilot was attempting a takeoff from a field site. The field was in an elevated coastal position, takeoff being on a heading of 140° with a slight upwards slope. The length of field available was 265 m, with a combination wall and hedge at its far end. The weather was fine, but with a brisk 20 kt wind from 200°.

Pre-takeoff checks were normal and the flex-wing microlight accelerated and became airborne as expected. However, whereas the pilot expected the aircraft to start to pitch up as it gained airspeed after takeoff, it remained in a more level attitude. He made a forward input on the control bar, and the aircraft responded by pitching up but then returned to its original attitude. The pilot assessed that there was insufficient distance to abort the takeoff safely, so continued at full power. His intention was to gain sufficient airspeed to allow the aircraft to climb above the hedge at the field boundary. Using full forward control bar movement, the pilot almost succeeded in clearing the hedge, but the main landing gear caught it and slowed the aircraft down.

With an increased angle of attack and reducing speed, the aircraft stalled and landed heavily on its main landing gear, causing it to collapse. The pilot and passenger were able to vacate the aircraft unaided. The pilot was uninjured but the passenger suffered a bruised ankle from impact with a footrest as the aircraft rolled to the left after the landing gear collapsed.

The pilot observed that he had taken off from the field twice on the previous day in light winds and had not experienced a problem. He noted that on this occasion

the brisk surface wind was blowing upslope toward the field and over tall trees on the south-west side of the field. He believed, therefore, that the field had been subject to a local rotor effect which may have produced a downdraft over the field as he attempted the takeoff.