ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	DH89A Dragon Rapide, G-AKIF
No & type of Engines:	1 Gipsy Six Series 1 piston engine 1 Gipsy Six Series 1A piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1944
Date & Time (UTC):	2 August 2006 at 1332 hrs
Location:	Duxford Aerodrome, Cambridgeshire
Type of Flight:	Public Transport (Passenger)
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - 8
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Both propellers bent, left engine-mount distorted, left bracing struts to upper fuselage deformed, cowlings bent and landing gear fairing damaged
Commander's Licence:	Air Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	48 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,980 hours (of which 112 were on type) Last 90 days - 35 hours Last 28 days - 18 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

Shortly after touching down on the grass runway at Duxford Aerodrome a gust of wind, or a bump in the runway, caused the aircraft to become airborne again. The pilot checked forward on the control column to bring the main landing gear back onto the ground but was unable to control the nose-down pitching motion of the aircraft and the engine propellers struck the ground.

History of the flight

This accident occurred on the pilot's fourth flight of the day, all on the same aircraft and using Runway 24, which has a grass surface and an LDA of 890 m. The surface wind was from 310º at 16 kt, giving a crosswind component of 14 kt, and had been of a similar velocity throughout the day. It was also gusty with the pilot experiencing windshear of up to 15 kt on the approach.

After a normal approach, the aircraft touched down on the right main wheel and then the left, but before the tail wheel made contact with the runway the aircraft lifted off again. The pilot believed that this happened due to either a gust of wind or a bump on the runway. He checked forward on the control column to bring the main wheels back into contact with the ground and

then checked back again as the tail continued to rise. However, he was unable to arrest the nose-down pitch in time to prevent the propellers striking the ground. The aircraft was brought to a halt on the runway and the passengers disembarked using the normal exit.

There was considerably more damage to the left side of the aircraft than the right giving rise to the possibility that the left wing may have stalled during the landing sequence, adding to the pilot's control difficulties. In the prevailing gusty conditions, a shear of 15 kt on touchdown could lead to a wing stall, particularly on the downwind (left) wing. The pilot commented that landing on the longer, parallel asphalt/concrete runway might have been a preferable option. This would have offered a more predictable landing surface and additional time to consider and execute a go around if necessary.