



flooded runway. This caused him to decide to turn back and he reports that he considered diverting to Leicester Airport. As the aircraft turned south the weather deteriorated with rain and a lowering cloud base and the pilot was forced to descend to 1500 feet in order to maintain visual contact with the ground. He became uncertain of his position relative to the TV mast and reports that due to the weather conditions decided to make a precautionary landing.

The aircraft overflew an airfield which did not appear to have crosses marked on the runway, and the pilot could see a glider parked on the runway about quarter distance in from the north-west threshold. He assumed the airfield to be Saltby. He flew one low pass along the runway in an attempt to alert people on the ground and prompt them to move the glider. Then, as the weather was rapidly deteriorating further, decided to land over the glider towards the south-east. He completed a tight left hand circuit and reports that, when he was approaching the glider and just about to commence to flare, the aircraft suddenly pitched down, hit the runway hard with the nose section and stopped. The front of the nose section had sustained substantial damage and the pilot and front seat passenger released themselves and vacated the wreckage. Bystanders who had witnessed the accident released the children from the rear seats. There was no fire. The front seat occupants were restrained by lap and diagonal upper torso harness, the rear seat occupants by lap straps only. All had suffered injuries and were transferred to the Leicester Royal Infirmary.

The pilot was subsequently informed that the accident had occurred at the disused airfield at Great Dalby which is 8 nm south-west of Saltby, and that the aircraft had struck some 11,000 volt electricity cables which cross the runway. The glider had been parked underneath the cables in order to mark their position for an aircraft tug pilot who had been expected to arrive on the same afternoon. The cables are unmarked and reported to be difficult to see from the air.