

**No: 11/90**

**Ref: EW/G90/09/06**

**Category: 1c**

**Aircraft Type**

**and Registration:** Evans VP-1, G-PFAZ

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Volkswagen 1600 piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1982

**Date and Time (UTC):** 16 September 1990 at 1315 hrs

**Location:** Pelton, Chester-le-Street, County Durham

**Type of Flight:** Private

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1 Passengers - None

**Injuries:** Crew - 1 (minor) Passengers - N/A

**Nature of Damage:** Aircraft destroyed

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence

**Commander's Age:** 46 years

**Commander's Total Flying Experience:** 534 hours (of which 3 hours were on type)

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone inquiries by AAIB

The accident occurred shortly after take-off from a private landing strip at High Flatts Farm, Pelton. The landing strip is reported to be orientated 30/12 and to be 600 yards in length. In the 30 direction there is a down-slope for the first 200 yards, and thereafter an upslope for the remaining 400 yards which is followed by continually rising ground prior to a built up area. Immediately to the west is a main road with parallel electrical cables and a built up area further to the west. There is a further built up area to the north, and farm buildings to the east.

The pilot reports that the aircraft tanks were filled to capacity with fuel and oil and it was therefore close to the maximum permitted take off weight of 341 kg. The weather at the time was fine with a surface wind that he estimates to have been from 260° between 2 and 10 knots and an air temperature of about 17°C. After engine start a full run up was carried out and the engine appeared to be operating normally. The aircraft was taxied to the 30 threshold and a normal full power take-off was commenced. The aircraft became airborne after a ground run of about 250 yards at a speed of 50 mph, which the pilot states is 5 mph lower than usual. It initially climbed to about 20 feet above ground level when the pilot felt that he needed to lower the nose to gain airspeed. However, the aircraft failed to accelerate and by this time there was insufficient distance in which to land back on the strip. Being aware of the close proximity of buildings immediately to his left and right he reports that he realised that he could not turn

the aircraft, but thought that he would clear the buildings ahead. In the event he did not, and the main landing gear struck the top ridge tiles on the roof of a school building which was fortunately unoccupied at the time. The force of the impact detached the main landing gear, pitched the aircraft nose down and it crashed onto a road beyond the building. There was no fire and the pilot, who had suffered minor injuries, was released from the wreckage by local people who had witnessed the accident. He had been wearing full restraint harness which held throughout the impact. There was minor damage to tiles on the roof of the school building

In a detailed report of the circumstances, the accident pilot considers that a contributory cause was the marginal performance of the engine. Due to the severity of the damage this could not be determined by subsequent examination.