

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-180 Cherokee, G-AZDX	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-360-A4A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1971 (Serial no: 28-7105186)	
Date & Time (UTC):	26 August 2016 at 1000 hrs	
Location:	Private Strip, Hundon, Suffolk	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 3
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Right wing severed, left wing and right tailplane severely damaged	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	66 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,900 hours (of which 1,600 were on type) Last 90 days - 16 hours Last 28 days - 8 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The aircraft was about to carry out a private flight to St Omer (France) from Hundon (Suffolk) with four people on board. However, just after takeoff, the engine lost power and the aircraft failed to climb away. The pilot kept the wings level and carried out a forced landing through a hedge and into a field. The aircraft sustained serious damage to the wings and tailplane. The pilot and his passengers were uninjured. The cause of the power loss is unknown.

History of the flight

The aircraft was prepared for a flight from a private grass airfield near Hundon in Suffolk to St Omer with four people on board. The engine start and vital checks were uneventful with correct settings, pressures and temperatures throughout. After a normal takeoff run the aircraft became airborne and the pilot expected the aircraft to climb away normally. Then, without warning, there was a sudden reduction in power. The pilot kept the wings level and carried out a forced landing through a hedge and into a field at the end of the runway. During the landing the aircraft sustained the loss of the right wing, distortion to the right tailplane and severe damage to the left wing. The pilot and his passengers vacated the aircraft without injury.

Discussion

The aircraft had been refuelled earlier with sufficient fuel for the planned flight, with an allowance for diversion. The aircraft was below its maximum takeoff weight. The pilot was very familiar with the airfield and noted that the aircraft became airborne exactly where he had expected it to, as it had done on numerous occasions before. Based on the readings obtained during the power checks carried out prior to takeoff, there was no indication of an impending problem with the engine. At takeoff the fuel pump was running and the carburettor heat set to cold. At the time of writing the cause of the engine power loss is not known.