ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Mainair Rapier, G-MZIM
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 462 piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1997 (Serial no: 1124-0697-7-W927)
Date & Time (UTC):	16 May 2019 at 1655 hrs
Location:	Newtownards Airfield, Co. Down
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Minor) Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Severe damage to pod, main keel and the wing
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	63 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	550 hours (of which 528 were on type) Last 90 days - 15 hours Last 28 days - 10 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot had completed an uneventful flight from St. Angelo Airfield to Newtownards Airfield, Co. Down which was the pilot's 'home' airfield. The weather was good with visibility more than 10 km, high cloud and an OAT of 15°C. The pilot carried out an overhead join for Runway 15 (grass), with a surface wind of 150°/8 kt. There was some slight turbulence on the approach, but it did not cause any difficulty in maintaining the desired approach path. On touchdown or just before, the aircraft suddenly turned left and the pilot was not able to regain control before it struck a fence, which ran parallel to the grass runway. The pilot was unclear as to what had caused the aircraft to turn so suddenly and surprised at the lack of control, which prevented him from avoiding the fence. He suffered a significant foot injury but was able to get out of the aircraft without assistance.

The pilot did not think he had struck an obstacle just before or after touchdown which might have caused the sudden turn. He considered that the turn may have been due to wake turbulence from another flex wing aircraft that landed ahead of him, but there appeared to have been a safe distance between them. He reported that, in future, he would leave a greater distance between his aircraft and traffic landing ahead of him.