No: 11/88 **Ref: EW/G88/08/12** **Category: 2b**

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Westland S55 Mk 10, G-BKHC
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rolls Royce Gnome 10101 turboshaft engine
Year of Manufacture:	1961
Date and Time (UTC):	22 August 1988 at 1200 hrs
Location:	Windmill Cottage, Hadleigh, Suffolk
Type of Flight:	Short Ferry Flight
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 1 Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Rotor destroyed, forward right landing gear failed. Right side of fuselage damaged
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence (Helicopters) with Full Instructors Rating
Commander's Age:	41 years
Commander's Total Flying Experience:	610 hours (of which 60 were on type)
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone enquiries

The aircraft was being ferried from a private airfield to the pilot's house, a distance of about 5 nm. During the pre-flight cockpit checks, the pilot observed an indication of just over 350 lbs of fuel available; 150 lbs was the minimum which the pilot considered safe during flight. The fuel burn rate for this type of aircraft is about 450 lbs/hour and the pilot estimated that about 150 lbs would be required for the flight, including the manoeuvring before landing.

On reaching the destination, the pilot circled and then pulled the aircraft into a hover at about 25 feet agl. A stationary turn was then initiated, in order to make a rearwards approach to avoid a high hedge which was situated on sloping ground. During the turn the engine cut out, and the pilot was unable to cushion sufficiently the subsequent descent to the ground. The aircraft struck the sloping ground on its front right landing gear, which failed, allowing the aircraft to roll over onto its right side. The pilot evacuated the aircraft though the co-pilot's (left) door, but had sustained back injuries which required hospital treatment.

The pilot believes that the initial fuel indication may have been over-reading as a result of the aircraft having been parked on sloping ground and, with a lower than expected fuel level, that the fuel surged away from the engine feed in the turn, and starved the engine.