DEVELOPMENT OF PRODRUGS TO DELIVER SUPER-POTENT DRUGS TO PROSTATE TUMOURS

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Abstract

Conventional treatments for prostate cancer have significant limitations making it difficult to control the disease. Cyclopropabenzindoles (CBI) are more biologically potent, stable and synthetically accessible analogues of cyclopropapyrroloindole (CPI) anti-tumour antibiotics, such as duocarmycin-SA and CC1065. A polymeric prodrug carrying a CBI drug attached to the polymeric backbone through a PSA-cleavable linker peptide has two modes of selectivity: activation by PSA and the EPR effect. To synthesise a 5-amino-seco-CBI analogue, 2,4-dinitronaphthalen-1-ol gave di-Boc-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine in five steps (triflation, S_N_Ar displacement with iodide, reduction (loss of iodine), protection and restoration of the iodine. For the amino-seco-CBI, it was important to discriminate between N^2 and N^4. Acidic removal of the Boc-group(s) resulted in deiodination. NMR investigations showed an unexpected Wheland-like cationic intermediate. N^3 of naphthalene-1,3-diamine was selectively trifluoroacetylated and N^1 was masked with Boc. Electrophilic iodination gave an orthogonally protected 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine. Allylation at the trifluoroacetamide was followed by free radical cyclication with TEMPO trap. Removal of the trifluoroacetyl group allowed coupling to 5-(2-(dimethylamino)ethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylic acid. Reductive removal of 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine, substitution of the exposed hydroxy group with chloride and removal of the Boc-group gave the amino-seco-CBI drug, 5-amino-1-chloromethyl-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carboxyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benz[e]indole. A DNA-melting assay confirmed that it binds very strongly to dsDNA causing a 13 deg. C increase in melting temperature. The drug was a highly potent cytotoxin in vitro, with IC_{50} = 18 nM against LNCaP prostate cancer cells. The polymeric prodrug system involved the synthesis of the pentapeptide SSKLQ. The amide side chain of glutamine can be masked as the nitrile and this can be quantitatively hydrated to the γ-carboxamide of L-Gln with hydroperoxide. The pentapeptide was coupled to 4-methoxynaphthalen-1-amine and to poly(ethylene glycol) as a model polymeric prodrug system. Efficient release of the model drug from the polymeric prodrug by PSA will allow this polymeric prodrug system to be adopted for the synthesised amino-seco-CBI drug.
Publications


Contents

Acknowledgement ........................................................................................................... ii
Abstract .......................................................................................................................... iii
Publications ....................................................................................................................... iv
List of Figures .................................................................................................................. xv
List of Tables ................................................................................................................... xvii
List of Schemes ............................................................................................................... xvii
Abbreviations ................................................................................................................. xx

1 Introduction ...................................................................................................................... 1

1.1 Prostate development ............................................................................................... 1

1.2 Zones of the prostate .............................................................................................. 1

1.2.1 Peripheral zone .................................................................................................... 1

1.2.2 Central zone ........................................................................................................ 1

1.2.3 Transition zone .................................................................................................... 2

1.2.4 Periurethral zone ............................................................................................... 2

1.3 Functions of the prostate gland .............................................................................. 2

1.4 Prostate conditions .................................................................................................... 2

1.4.1 Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) .................................................................. 3

1.4.2 Prostatitis ........................................................................................................... 3

1.4.3 Prostate cancer .................................................................................................... 3

1.4.3.1 Incidence ........................................................................................................ 3

1.4.3.1.1 Age-adjusted incidence ............................................................................. 4

1.4.3.2 Mortality ......................................................................................................... 4

1.4.3.3 Aetiology ........................................................................................................ 5

1.4.3.4 Risk factors ..................................................................................................... 5

1.4.3.4.1 Age ............................................................................................................. 6

1.4.3.4.2 Family history and genetic susceptibility .................................................. 6

1.4.3.4.3 Diet and physical activities ...................................................................... 6

1.4.3.4.4 Occupation ............................................................................................... 7

1.4.3.4.5 Sex steroid hormones .............................................................................. 7

1.4.3.4.6 Infections and inflammation ..................................................................... 7

v
1.4.3.5 Tumourigenesis ................................................................. 8
1.4.3.6 Diagnosis ........................................................................... 9
  1.4.3.6.1 Digital rectal examination .............................................. 10
  1.4.3.6.2 PSA blood test .............................................................. 10
  1.4.3.6.3 Trans-rectal ultrasound and needle biopsy .................. 11
  1.4.3.6.4 Grading and clinical staging ......................................... 11
1.4.3.7 Presentation ....................................................................... 12
1.4.3.8 Management ..................................................................... 13
  1.4.3.8.1 Localised prostate cancer ............................................. 13
    1.4.3.8.1.1 Watchful waiting and active surveillance ............... 13
    1.4.3.8.1.2 Radical prostatectomy ........................................... 13
    1.4.3.8.1.3 Radiotherapy .......................................................... 14
      1.4.3.8.1.3.1 External beam radiotherapy (EBRT) ................. 14
      1.4.3.8.1.3.2 Brachytherapy ................................................... 14
    1.4.3.8.1.4 Experimental local treatment ................................. 14
  1.4.3.8.2 Metastatic prostate cancer .......................................... 14
    1.4.3.8.2.1 Hormonal therapy ............................................... 14
    1.4.3.8.2.2 Bilateral orchidectomy ......................................... 15
    1.4.3.8.2.3 Luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone (LHRH) receptor agonists (e.g. busereline, gosereline) ......................................................... 15
    1.4.3.8.2.4 LHRH antagonists (e.g. degarelix) ......................... 16
    1.4.3.8.2.5 Androgen receptor antagonists .............................. 16
  1.4.3.8.3 Hormone-refractory prostate cancer ............................. 16
1.4.3.9 Novel therapeutic approaches ......................................... 17
  1.4.3.9.1 Mechanism of the anti-tumour antibiotics .................... 18
  1.4.3.9.2 Inhibition of macromolecular synthesis and enzymes .... 19
  1.4.3.9.3 Apoptotic cell death ...................................................... 20
  1.4.3.9.4 Structure-activity relationship .................................... 20
  1.4.3.9.5 DNA-alkylation selectivity .......................................... 21
  1.4.3.9.6 Stereoelectronic control of ring opening of cyclopropane 22
  1.4.3.9.7 Functional reactivity and biological activity .................. 24
  1.4.3.9.8 Influence of the stability of vinylogous amide on reactivity 25
  1.4.3.9.9 Linking amide ........................................................... 27
  1.4.3.9.10 Effect of relocating the C4-carbonyl group .................. 28
  1.4.3.9.11 Importance of the cyclopropane ring .......................... 28
1.4.3.9.12 Reversibility of alkylation ................................................................. 29
1.4.3.9.13 Limitations of the natural anti-tumour antibiotics ......................... 30
1.4.3.9.14 Modification of the CPI alkylation subunit ........................................ 32
1.4.3.9.15 CBIs .................................................................................................. 33
1.4.3.9.16 Modification of the non-alkylating subunit ........................................ 35
1.4.3.9.17 Prodrugs .......................................................................................... 36
1.4.3.9.17.1 Tumour-activated prodrugs ......................................................... 36
1.4.3.9.17.2 Enzyme-based activation of prodrugs ........................................... 37
   1.4.3.9.17.2.1 ADEPT ............................................................................... 37
   1.4.3.9.17.2.2 GDEPT ............................................................................... 38
   1.4.3.9.17.2.3 PMT .................................................................................. 39
1.4.3.9.17.3 Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) ................................................. 39
   1.4.3.9.17.3.1 PSA-cleavable prodrugs ...................................................... 40
1.4.3.9.18 Self-immolative linkers ..................................................................... 43
   1.4.3.9.18.1 ADEPT based linkers .............................................................. 43
   1.4.3.9.18.2 PMT based linkers ................................................................... 44
   1.4.3.9.18.3 Non-peptide linkers ............................................................... 45
   1.4.3.9.18.4 Dipeptide-based linkers .......................................................... 45
   1.4.3.9.18.4.1 Proline-based dipeptide linkers ............................................ 45
   1.4.3.9.18.4.2 Pseudo-proline based linkers ............................................. 47
1.4.3.10 Enhanced permeability and retention effect (EPR) ........................... 47
   1.4.3.10.1 Drug-polymer conjugates ......................................................... 49
   1.4.3.10.2 PEGylated prodrugs .................................................................. 51

2  Aims and objectives .......................................................................................... 54
   2.1 Aims ....................................................................................................... 54
   2.2 Objectives ............................................................................................... 54

3  Results and discussion ..................................................................................... 58
   3.1 Synthetic approaches to the CBI “warhead” ......................................... 59
       3.1.1 Synthesis of the key intermediate of the 5-hydroxy-CBI derivatives .... 60
       3.1.2 Post- and pre-cyclisation functionalisation of the CBI pyrrolidine ring ....... 60
       3.1.3 In situ functionalisation of the CBI pyrrolidine ring ............................. 61
       3.1.4 Metal-mediated cyclisation .................................................................. 62
       3.1.5 Synthesis of the 5-amino CBI derivatives ........................................ 63
3.2 Synthesis of the alkylating subunit of the proposed CBI drug.................................64
  3.2.1 Mono-nitration of naphthalen-1-ol........................................................................65
  3.2.2 Selective nitration of 4-aminonaphthalen-1-ol..................................................66
  3.2.3 Attempted nucleophilic displacement of triflate group with iodide in 4-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (38).........68
  3.2.4 Reduction of the aryl triflate................................................................................70
  3.2.5 Reduction of the nitro group of 4-(tert-butoxycarbonylamino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (43) .................................................................72
  3.2.6 Masking of the phenol group................................................................................73
  3.2.7 Unexpected formation of a quinone imine on reduction of tert-butyl N-(4-hydroxy-3-nitronaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (42)............................................................73
  3.2.8 Attempted reduction of the nitro group(s) of 1-Iodo-2,4-dinitronaphthalene (54) and the synthesis of N,N’-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25)..................................................................................................................74
  3.2.8.1 Synthesis of 1-iodo-2,4-dinitronaphthalene (54)..............................................75
  3.2.8.2 Attempted reduction of the 4-nitro group of 1-iodo-2,4-dinitronaphthlene (54)...............................................................................................................................75
  3.2.8.3 Reductive de-iodination....................................................................................76
  3.2.8.4 The synthesis of N,N’-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25).......................................................................................................................76
  3.2.9 Acidic de-iodination of N,N’-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25).......................................................................................................................77
  3.2.10 Synthesis of the naphthalene key intermediate (67)..........................................78
  3.2.11 NMR investigation into the de-iodination of iodonaphthalenediamines in acidic media..............................................................................................................................80
  3.2.11.1 Wheland-like intermediates in the de-iodination of N,N’-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25) in acidic media .................................81
  3.2.11.2 Wheland-like intermediates from naphthalene-1,3-diamine in acidic media.................................................................................................................................84
  3.2.11.3 De-iodination of tert-butyl N-(4-iodo-3-trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (67) in acidic media ..............................................................88
  3.2.11.4 Incorporation of deuterium into 2-methyl propene .......................................89
  3.2.11.5 Proposed mechanism for de-iodination of 1-iodonaphthalen-2,4-diamine (68) via Wheland intermediate .................................................................................90
  3.2.12 Sharpless epoxidation.........................................................................................91
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2.13</td>
<td>Selective N²-alkylation of tert-butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (67)</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.14</td>
<td>Metal-mediated cyclisation</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.15</td>
<td>Free-radical cyclisation</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Synthesis of the non-alkylating subunit of proposed CBI drug</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1</td>
<td>Fisher-like indole synthesis</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Synthesis of 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carboxylic acid (DMAI) (127)</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Coupling of the alkylating and non-alkylating subunits</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Reductive removal of the 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine protecting group</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Activation of the proposed seco-CBI drug</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Calf-thymus DNA melting assay</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Cytotoxicity assay</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Peptide synthesis</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.1</td>
<td>Formation of Fmoc-aminoglutarimide</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.2</td>
<td>The use of β-cyanomethyl-L-Ala as a masked form of L-glutamine</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3</td>
<td>Hydration of terminal Gln nitrile group</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.4</td>
<td>Solid-phase peptide synthesis</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.4.1</td>
<td>Synthesis of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-OH (189)</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Synthesis of 1-benzyloxyisoquinolin-5-amine (193) as a model drug</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>Coupling of model drug to peptide</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>Synthesis of 4-methoxynaphthalen-1-amine (200) as a model drug</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>Coupling of 4-methoxynaphthalen-1-amine to proposed PSA-cleavable peptide</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>Study on the PSA-catalysed cleavage of Fmoc-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-4-methoxynaphthalenamide</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>Synthesis of Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>Study on PSA-cleavage of Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-y)amide</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>The synthesis of polymeric peptide-model drug</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>Investigation into the use of molecular clip</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.19  Synthesis of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-Leu-D-Ser-OH ........ 139
3.20  The synthesis of 5,5-dimethyl-4-oxaproline (Dmo) molecular clip .......... 140

4  Conclusion .......................................................................................................................... 143

5  Experimental .......................................................................................................................... 146

5.1  General ............................................................................................................................... 146
5.2  Benzyl N-(4-hydroxynaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (32) ............................................ 147
5.3  Naphthalene-1,4-dione (35) ............................................................................................ 148
5.4  4-Amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-ol (40) ............................................................................ 148
5.5  4-Amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl tert-butyl carbonate (41) ........................................ 149
5.6  tert-Butyl (4-hydroxy-3-nitronaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (42) ................................ 149
5.7  4-(tert-Butyloxycarbonyl)amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (43) ................................................................................................................................. 150
5.8  Attempted nucleophilic displacement of the triflate group of 43 with iodide ..... 150
5.9  Attempted reduction of the triflate group of 43 ............................................................ 150
5.10  (E)-tert-Butyl (3-amino-4-oxonaphthalen-1(4H)-ylidene)carbamate (50) ........ 151
5.11  tert-Butyl N-(4-oxo-3-(2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalen-1-ylidene)carbamate (52) ................................................................................................................................. 151
5.12  2,4-Dinitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (53) .................................... 152
5.13  1-Iodo-2,4-dinitronaphthalene (54) .............................................................................. 152
5.14  Naphthalene-1,3-diamine (58) ....................................................................................... 153
5.15  N,N′-Bis(tert-butyloxycarbonyl)naphthalene-1,3-diamine (59) ............................... 153
5.16  N,N′-Bis(tert-butyloxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25) .................. 153
5.17  Selective de-iodination of N,N′-Bis(tert-butyloxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25) ................................................................................................................................. 154
5.18  tert-Butyl N-(1-aminonaphthalen-3-yl)carbamate (62) ............................................ 154
5.19  1,3-Bis(trifluoroacetamido)naphthalene (63) ............................................................... 155
5.20  N-(1-aminonaphthalen-3-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (65) ..................................... 155
5.21  tert-Butyl N-(3-trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (66) ...................... 156
5.22 tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (67)........ 156

5.23 Wheland-like intermediates in the de-iodination of N,N’-Bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25) in acidic media ................................................................. 157
  5.23.1 1-Iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (68) ................................................................. 157
  5.23.2 2-Imino-1-iodo-1,2-dihydonaphthalen-4-amine (69) ......................... 157
  5.23.3 Deuterated 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (70) ...................................... 158
  5.23.4 Deuterated 2-imino-1-iodo-1,2-dihydonaphthalen-4-amine (71) ........ 158
  5.23.5 Deuterated naphthalene-1,3-diamine (72) .............................................. 158

5.24 Wheland-like intermediates from naphthalene-1,3-diamine in acidic media .... 158
  5.24.1 Naphthalene-1,3-diammonium (73) .............................................................. 159
  5.24.2 3-Imino-3,4-dihydonaphthalen-1-ammonium (74) .............................. 159
  5.24.3 Deuterated naphthalene-1,3-diamine (75) .............................................. 159
  5.24.4 Deuterated 3-imino-3,4-dihydonaphthalen-1-amine (76) .............. 159

5.25 De-iodination of tert-butyl (4-iodo-3-(2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (67) in acidic media ............................................................................. 160
  5.25.1 N-(4-Amino-1-iodonaphthalen-2-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (77) ..... 160
  5.25.2 Deuterated N-(4-amino-1-iodonaphthalen-2-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (79) .................................................. 160
  5.25.3 Deuterated N-(1-aminonaphthalen-3-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (80) ... 161

5.26 Entrapment of tert-butyl cation by trifluoroacetic acid .................................. 161
  5.26.1 tert-Butyl 2,2,2-trifluoroacetate (81) ............................................................. 161
  5.26.2 Deuterated tert-butyl 2,2,2-trifluoroacetate (82) ...................................... 161

5.27 (2R,3R)-3-Methyloxiran-2-yl)methanol (90) ..................................................... 161

5.28 2R, 3S (3-Methyloxiran-2-yl)methyl 4-nitrobenzenesulfonate (91) ............. 162

5.29 (S)-Oxiran-2-ylmethyl 4-nitrobenzenesulfonate (93) .................................... 162

5.30 tert-Butyl N-(R-1-iodo-2-(N-(oxiran-1ylmethyl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (95) ........................................................................... 163

5.31 (S)-tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-((oxiran-2-ylmethyl)amino)-naphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (97) ......................................................................................... 165

5.32 Preliminary study using Bu′₄ZnLi₂ as a reagent for cyclisation of terminal epoxides ................................................................. 166
  5.32.1 4-(Prop-2-enyl)phenol (99) ........................................................................ 166
5.33 tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(N-(prop-2-ethyl))-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalene4-yl-N-(prop-2-ethyl)carbamate (103) ................................................................. 166

5.34 tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(N-(prop-2-ethyl))-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalene4-yl)carbamate (104) ........................................................................................................ 167

5.35 tert-Butyl N-(1-(2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-yloxy)methyl)-3-(trifluoroacetyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (105) ....................................................... 169

5.36 tert-Butyl N-(1-((2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-yloxy)methyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (106) ........................................................................... 170

5.37 N,N-Dimethyl-2-(4-nitrophenoxo)ethylamine (108) ....................................................... 170

5.38 2-(4-Aminophenoxy)-N,N-dimethylethylamine (109) ..................................................... 171

5.39 Ethyl 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (110) .................................. 171

5.40 Preliminary test of the use of ethanolic HCl for esterification ...................................... 172

5.40.1 Ethyl 2-(1H-indol-3-yloxy)acetate (123) ................................................................. 172

5.41 Ethyl 5-hydroxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (125) .......................................................... 172

5.42 Ethyl 5-ethoxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (126) ............................................................ 173

5.43 Ethyl 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (110) .............................. 173

5.44 5-(2-(Dimethylamino)ethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylic acid (127) ............................. 174

5.45 tert-Butyl N-(3-(5-(2-(dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carbonyl)-1-((2,2,6,6-
tetramethylpiperidin-1-yloxy)methyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate
(128) ......................................................................................................................... 175

5.46 Reductive removal of the 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine protecting group .............. 176

5.47 (5-(tert-Butoxycarbonylamino)-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy) indole-2-carbonyl)-
2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-1-yl)methyl acetate (130) ............................................ 177

5.48 tert-Butyl N-(3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy) indole-2-carbonyl)-1-(hydroxymethyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (133) ...................................... 177

5.49 N'-((1-Chloromethyl)-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy) indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-
dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)-N,N-dimethylformimidamide (134) ....................... 178

5.50 tert-Butyl N-((1-chloromethyl)-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy) indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-
dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (135) ...................................................... 179
5.51 5-Amino-1-chloromethyl-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indole dihydrochloride (136) .......................................................... 180
5.52 (9H-Fluoren-9-yl)methyl S-(2,6-dioxopiperidin-3-yl)carbamate (157) .............. 181
5.53 S-2-(Benzyloxycarbonylamino)-4-cyanobutanoic acid (163) ............................ 182
5.54 tert-Butyl N-(N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (168) . 182
5.55 tert-Butyl N-(L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (169) ......................................... 183
5.56 tert-Butyl N-(N-(S-2-phenylmethoxycarbonylamino-4-cyanobutanyl)-L-leucyl)-D-
serine methyl ester (170) ......................................................................................... 183
5.57 N-(N-(S-2-Amino-4-cyanobutanyl)-L-leucyl)-tert-butoxycarbonyl-D-serine methyl ester (171)........................................................................................................ 184
5.58 tert-Butyl N-(N-(S-2-((N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)amino)-4-
cyanobutanyl)-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (172) ................................................... 185
5.59 tert-Butyl N-(N-(N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)-L-glutamyl)-L-leucyl)-D-
serine methyl ester (173) ......................................................................................... 185
5.60 N-(N-(S-2-((N-Phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)amino)-4-cyanobutanyl)-L-
leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (174) ........................................................................... 186
5.61 Methyl R-2,2-dimethyl-3-(S-N-(4-cyano-2-(N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl-
amino)butanoyl)-L-leucyl)oxazolidine-4-carboxylate (175) ....................................... 187
5.62 N-(N-(S-4-Cyano-2-(phenylmethoxycarbonylamino)butanoyl)-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (176) ........................................................................................................ 187
5.63 Methyl R-2,2-dimethyl-3-(S-N-(4-cyano-2-(phenylmethoxycarbonylamino)-butanoyl)-L-leucyl)oxazolidine-4-carboxylate (177) ............................................................... 188
5.64 Methyl S-2-(2-(benzyloxycarbonylamino)-4-cyanobutanamido)propanoate (178) 189
5.65 N-(S-4-Cyano-2-(N-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-L-alanyl)butanoyl)-L-alanine (180) . 189
5.66 N-(N-(tert-Butoxycarbonyl)-L-alanyl)-L-glutaminyl)-L-alanine (181) ............... 190
5.67 N-Phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-glutamic acid (188) ............................................... 191
5.68 Solid phase peptide synthesis ............................................................................. 191
5.69 Fmoc-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Lys(Cbz)-L-Leu-L-Gln-OH (189) ......................... 192
5.70 Chloro-5-nitroisoquinoline (191) ......................................................................... 193
5.71  1-Benzyl-5-nitroisoquinoline (192) ................................................................. 193
5.72  1-Benzyl-5-amine (193) .............................................................................. 194
5.73  N-(4-Hydroxynaphthalen-1-yl)acetamide (198) .................................................. 194
5.74  N-(4-Methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)acetamide (199) ............................................. 195
5.75  4-Methoxynaphthalen-1-amine (200) ................................................................ 195
5.76  Fmoc-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (201) ................................................................. 196
5.77  Fmoc-L-Ser(OAc)-L-Ser(OAc)-L-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (202) ................................................................. 197
5.78  Fmoc-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (203) ........ 198
5.79  Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (204) ................................................................................... 199
5.80  Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (205) ............... 200
5.81  α-Methoxy-ω-(4-nitrophenoxy carbonyl)-polyoxyethylene (207) ................. 201
5.82  mPEG-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Leu-Gln-5-methoxynaphthalenamide (208) ........................................................................ 201
5.83  Fmoc-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Leu-Gln-L-Leu-L-D-Ser(Bu')-OH (213) .......... 202
5.84  Calf-thymus DNA melting assay ................................................................ 203
   5.84.1  Buffer preparation .............................................................................. 203
   5.84.2  Calf thymus DNA solution preparation .............................................. 203
   5.84.3  Calculations ....................................................................................... 203
   5.84.4  Procedure ......................................................................................... 204
5.85  Cytotoxicity assay .................................................................................... 205
   5.85.1  Preparation of cell suspension .............................................................. 205
   5.85.2  Assay ................................................................................................. 205
5.86  PSA-Cleavage Assay ................................................................................ 206
   5.86.1  Buffer preparation .............................................................................. 206
   5.86.2  Assay ................................................................................................. 206

6  References .................................................................................................... 207
List of Figures

Figure 1: Age-adjusted prostate cancer mortality rates per 100,000 men in various countries for the year 2000. ................................................................. 4
Figure 2: Pathogenesis of prostate cancer. ................................................................. 8
Figure 3: The effects of hormonal treatments on testosterone production. ................. 15
Figure 4: Structure of abiraterone ............................................................................ 17
Figure 5: Structures of selected natural anti-tumour antibiotics. ................................. 18
Figure 6: Alkylation of CC-1065 by adenine N3 ...................................................... 19
Figure 7: Proposed mechanism for seco-CPI ............................................................ 19
Figure 8: Alkylating subunits for CPI and CBI analogues .......................................... 21
Figure 9: Side and 90° rotation view of cyclopropane ring of CBI and CBQ .................. 23
Figure 10: Acidic solvolysis of N-Boc-CNA using CF3CO2H (0.12 eqv.) in H2O/THF ........ 24
Figure 11: Vinylogous amide conjugation. ................................................................. 25
Figure 12: Effects of destabilising the vinylogous amide conjugation. ......................... 26
Figure 13: Structure of CBIn .................................................................................. 26
Figure 14: Effects of N2 substitution ......................................................................... 27
Figure 15: Structures of iso-CI and iso-CBI .............................................................. 28
Figure 16: Structure of N-Boc-CbBI ........................................................................ 28
Figure 17: CC-1065 structure and activity relationships ............................................. 31
Figure 18: Anallogues of the alkylating subunits of the anti-tumour antibiotics ......... 33
Figure 19: CBI and CPI alkylating subunits ............................................................. 34
Figure 20: Cytotoxicity (IC50 in nM, 4 h exposure, ±SE) for nitrogen-substituted seco-CBI-TMI analogues ................................................................. 34
Figure 21: Effects of DMAI non-alkylating subunit. a Solubility in 0.1 M phosphate buffer (pH 7.0) at room temperature. ................................................................. 36
Figure 22: Model for tumour-activated prodrugs ......................................................... 37
Figure 23: Activation of a duocarmycin analogue via the ADEPT concept .................. 38
Figure 24: PSA protein binding .............................................................................. 40
Figure 25: 2’-MuSSKYQ-EDA-paclitaxel effects on a range of cell lines ...................... 42
Figure 26: Mechanism for self-immolation of linkers ................................................. 43
Figure 27: β-D-galactosidase activatable CBI prodrug ............................................. 44
Figure 28: PSA-cleavable paclitaxel prodrugs ................................................................ 45
Figure 29: Cis/trans dipeptide configurations ............................................................. 46
Figure 30: Structures of R-Dmt and S-Dmo. ............................................................... 47
Figure 31: Anatomical differences between normal and tumour tissues.......................... 48
Figure 32: PSA-cleavable polymeric L12ADT prodrug- HPMA-SSKYQL-12ADT. .............. 50
Figure 33: Levels of L12ADT at 24 h after i.v. injection of HPMA-SSKYQL-12ADT into nude mice bearing s.c. PSA-positive CWR22R-H xenografts........................................... 51
Figure 34: General structures for poly(ethylene glycol). ................................................. 52
Figure 35: Lysosomally cleavable polymeric prodrug....................................................... 53
Figure 36: Proposed seco-CBI and the corresponding polymeric prodrugs......................... 54
Figure 37: Carbocation and carbanion intermediates of benzene and their $^{13}$C NMR shifts (ppm). .................................................................................................................. 69
Figure 38: Time-course of $^1$H NMR spectra of reaction of 25 with CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ (3:1). 81
Figure 39: Time-course of $^1$H NMR spectra of reaction of 25 with CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ (3:1). 83
Figure 40: HSQC and ADEPT spectra of 74........................................................................ 85
Figure 41: Time course $^1$H NMR showing increasing deuteration at C1 and C3................. 86
Figure 42: HSQC spectrum of 76 showing the CHD and CH$_2$ signals and corresponding $^{13}$C signals. ...................................................................................................................... 87
Figure 43: Mechanism of incorporation of deuterium in Bu’ trifluoroacetate and $^{13}$CNMR showing C → D coupling as a result of incorporation of deuterium into Bu’..................... 89
Figure 44: Atropisomerism arising from restricted rotation about the N-aryl bond caused by the bulky iodine. .................................................................................................................. 95
Figure 45: Structure of 103 derived from energy-minimising MM2 calculations. ............... 99
Figure 46: Normalised melting curve for 136 at different molar equivalents (MEq). .......... 111
Figure 47: First derivative melting curve for 136 at varying molar equivalents (MEq) ....... 112
Figure 48: $T_m$ shift against molar equivalent (MEq) of proposed CBI drug 136. ............. 113
Figure 49: Inhibitory effect of 136 on LNCaP cells ±SD....................................................... 115
Figure 50: Inhibitory effect of 135 on LNCaP cells ±SD....................................................... 116
Figure 51: Weinstein cyclisation by the proposed seco-CBI.............................................. 116
Figure 52: Possible products from prolonged hydrogenolysis of Cbz-Gln(CN)-Ala-OMe. .. 123
Figure 53: Structure of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-OH.............................. 126
Figure 54: Mass spectra for 207 showing multiply cationised species. ............................... 136
Figure 55: Mass spectra for 208 showing multiply cationised species. ............................... 135
Figure 56: Structure of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-Leu-R-Dmo................ 140
List of Tables

Table 1: Age specific reference ranges for PSA ................................................................. 10
Table 2: Gleason grading and TNM staging of prostate cancer ............................................. 12

List of Schemes

Scheme 1: Thermal decomposition of DNA-CPI adduct. A; reversal of alkylation, B; depurination ........................................................ ................................ 30
Scheme 2: Mechanism of drug release by cyclisation-based linkers .................................. 46
Scheme 3: Synthesis of the alkylation subunit of proposed seco-CBI drug ......................... 55
Scheme 4: Retrosynthesis of proposed polymeric prodrug system .................................. 58
Scheme 5: Synthesis of tert-butyl (4-(benzyloxy)-1-bromonaphthen-2-yl)carbamate 10.. 60
Scheme 6: Pre- and post-functionalisation of CBI pyrrolidine ring .................................. 60
Scheme 7: Synthesis of CBI pyrrolidine ring with TEMPO trap .................................... 61
Scheme 8: Synthesis of CBI pyrrolidine ring via metal-mediated cyclisation ..................... 62
Scheme 9: Synthesis of 5-amino CBI derivative ............................................................... 63
Scheme 10: Retrosynthesis of the alkylation subunit of the proposed CBI drug .................. 64
Scheme 11: Attempted mononitration of naphthalene-1-ol ............................................. 65
Scheme 12: Nitration of 4-amino-naphthalene-1-ol ......................................................... 66
Scheme 13: Proposed mechanism of oxidative deamination of 31 .................................... 67
Scheme 14: Attempted substitution of triflate group with iodide ..................................... 68
Scheme 15: Proposed mechanisms of iodination of 43 and regeneration of 42 .................... 70
Scheme 16: Attempted reduction of the triflate group of 43 ............................................. 71
Scheme 17: Attempted reduction of the nitro group of 43 .............................................. 72
Scheme 18: Attempted silylation of 42 ........................................................................ 73
Scheme 19: Formation of quinine imine ...................................................................... 73
Scheme 20: Attempted reduction of the nitro group(s) of 54 and the synthesis of 25 ......... 75
Scheme 21: Acidic de-iodination ................................................................................... 77
Scheme 22: Synthesis of the key intermediate 67 ......................................................... 78
Scheme 23: Reactions of 25 with CF₃CO₂H and with CF₃CO₂D in CDCl₃, showing Wheland-like intermediates ................................................................. 81
Scheme 24: Reactions of 58 with CF₃CO₂H and with CF₃CO₂D in CDCl₃, showing Wieland-like intermediates ................................................................. 84
Scheme 25: Reactions of 67 with CF₃CO₂H and with CF₃CO₂D in CDCl₃, showing Wheland-like intermediates ................................................................. 88
Scheme 26: Proposed mechanism of de-iodination of 1-iodonaphalen-2,4-diamine........90
Scheme 27: Delivery of the epoxide oxygen to the double bond in Sharpless epoxidation.....92
Scheme 28: Metal mediated cyclisation with lithium coordinated transition state. .............93
Scheme 29: Sharpless epoxidation. ..................................................................................93
Scheme 30: Selective N²-alkylation of 67..........................................................................94
Scheme 31: Attempted metal mediated cyclisation..........................................................96
Scheme 32: Possible 5-exo-trig and 6-endo-trig cyclisation products and spirocyclisation of the endo-produt to generate the pyrrolidine ring and the electrophilic cyclopropane ring. .....97
Scheme 33: Free radical cyclisation with TEMPO trap. ....................................................98
Scheme 34: Synthesis of ethyl 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylate 110..100
Scheme 35: Proposed mechanism of the synthesis of 110 via a diazonium intermediate rather than the usual hydrazine intermediate of Fisher indole synthesis. ....................................................101
Scheme 36: Synthesis of DMAI. ............................................................................................102
Scheme 37: Coupling of the alkylating subunit 106 and the DMAI subunit 127.. ........104
Scheme 38: Reduction of 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine....................................................105
Scheme 39: Activation of seco-CBI drug.............................................................................106
Scheme 40: Proposed mechanism of attempted Appel reaction..........................................107
Scheme 41: Proposed mechanism for condensation of the exocyclic nitrogen of 135 with a derivative of dimethylformamide. ....................................................................................109
Scheme 42: The melting of double stranded DNA by increasing temperature...............110
Scheme 43: Structures of MTS tetrazolium and its formazan product. ..........................114
Scheme 44: Dehydration of Gln to form the nitriles 153 or the glutarimides 154. ..........118
Scheme 45: Formation of Fmoc-aminoglutarimide.. .......................................................118
Scheme 46: Mechanism for formation of Fmoc-glutarimide with DCC and with trifluoroacetic anhydride. ..........................................................119
Scheme 47: Dehydration of the side-chain amide of Gln to give the nitrile. ......................119
Scheme 48: Proposed mechanism for the dehydration of the γ-carboxamide side-chain of glutamine to form the nitrile.................................................................120
Scheme 49: Incorporation Gln(CN) into a growing peptide chain and its compatibility with other protecting groups.................................................................121
Scheme 50: Compatibility of Gln(CN) with Cbz- and Boc-protecting groups..............122
Scheme 51: Proposed mechanism for hydrolysis of 163 to 188. .................................124
Scheme 52: Solid phase peptide synthesis cycle and coupling of amino-acids to 2-chlorotrityl chloride resin. .................................................................................125
Scheme 53: Synthesis of 5-AIQ-model drug....................................................................127
Scheme 54: Coupling of proposed PSA-cleavable peptide 189 to 5-AIQ derivative 193.. ... 128
Scheme 55: Synthesis of naphthalene-based model drug...................................................... 129
Scheme 56: Synthesis of Fmoc-peptide-model drug conjugate. .......................................... 130
Scheme 57: Synthesis of peptide-model drug conjugate 205.............................................. 132
Scheme 58: Synthesis of polymeric peptide prodrug.......................................................... 134
Scheme 59: Proposed mechanism for the release of seco-CBIs by PSA-cleavage and spontaneous cyclisation............................................................................................................. 137
Scheme 60: Confromations of Leu-R-Dmo molecular clip.................................................. 138
Scheme 61: Synthesis of heptapeptide 214. ..................................................................... 139
Scheme 62: Synthsis of the Dmo motif.............................................................................. 141
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AcOH</td>
<td>Acetic acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>α-1-Antichymotrypsin</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADEPT</td>
<td>Antibody-directed enzyme prodrug therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMC</td>
<td>7-Amino-4-methyl coumarin</td>
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<tr>
<td>A2M</td>
<td>α-2-Macroglobulin</td>
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<td>API</td>
<td>α-1-Trypsin inhibitor</td>
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<td>Boc</td>
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<td>Boc₂O</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPH</td>
<td>Benign prostatic hyperplasia</td>
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<td>Bu'ỌK⁺</td>
<td>Potassium tert-butoxide</td>
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<td>Bu'</td>
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<td>4-Dimethylaminopyridine</td>
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<tr>
<td>DMEM</td>
<td>Dulbecco’s Modified Eagle’s Medium</td>
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<td>HPMA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mu</td>
<td>Morpholinocarbonyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;i&gt;m/z&lt;/i&gt;</td>
<td>Mass to charge ratio (mass spectrometry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIS</td>
<td>N-Iodosuccinimide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PABA</td>
<td>4-Aminobenzyl alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBS</td>
<td>Phosphate buffered saline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCa</td>
<td>Prostate cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEG</td>
<td>Poly(ethylene glycol)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIA</td>
<td>Proliferative inflammatory atrophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMT</td>
<td>Prodrug monotherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIN</td>
<td>Prostatic intraepithelial neoplasia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSA</td>
<td>Prostate-specific antigen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PyBOP</td>
<td>Benzotriazol-1-yl-oxytrypyrroldinophosphonium hexafluorophosphate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PZ</td>
<td>Peripheral zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&lt;sub&gt;f&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>Retention factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNASEL</td>
<td>Ribonuclease L (2',5'-oligoisoadenylate synthetase-dependent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNS</td>
<td>Reactive nitrogen species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROS</td>
<td>Reactive oxygenative species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Reverse phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ser</td>
<td>Serine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPB</td>
<td>Sodium phosphate buffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAPS</td>
<td>Tumour-activated prodrugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBHP</td>
<td>tert-Butyl hydroperoxide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMPO</td>
<td>(2,2,6,6-Tetramethylpiperidin-1-yl)oxyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFA</td>
<td>Trifluoroacetic acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THF</td>
<td>Tetrahydrofuran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>Thin layer chromatography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T_m$</td>
<td>Transition-melting temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMI</td>
<td>Trimethoxyindole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNM</td>
<td>Tumour, lymph nodes and metastasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tPSA</td>
<td>Total prostate-specific antigen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMPRSS2</td>
<td>Transmembrane protease serine 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tris</td>
<td>Tris(hydroxymethyl)aminomethane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUS</td>
<td>Trans-rectal ultrasound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TsOH-</td>
<td>para-Toluenesulfonic acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TZ</td>
<td>Transition zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGS</td>
<td>Urogenital sinus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UV</td>
<td>Ultraviolet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIS</td>
<td>Visible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction

The walnut-sized prostate gland is the site of two of the most commonly encountered medical problems in elderly men: benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and prostate cancer (PCa). The prostate gland is part of the male reproductive system lying in front of the rectum just beneath the bladder and surrounding the upper part of the urethra.

1.1 Prostate development

The development of prostate gland starts around the 10\textsuperscript{th} week of gestation triggered by production of testosterone by the foetal testis around week 8. Binding of α-dihydrotestosterone to androgen receptors in surrounding mesenchymal tissue causes the initial growth of prostate buds from the urogenital sinus (UGS). These outgrowths undergo extensive morphogenesis during the latter days of foetal growth. Influence of androgens during the postnatal stage results in further differentiation and development of the secretory role of the prostate. The posterior part of the prostate is the glandular region, whilst the anterior section of the prostate is entirely fibromuscular in nature.\textsuperscript{1} Up to 40\% of PCa occurs in the anterior section of the prostate gland.\textsuperscript{2}

1.2 Zones of the prostate

The prostate consists of four anatomical zones based on biological and histological concepts. The zones originate from the prostatic urethra and have different features.\textsuperscript{3}

1.2.1 Peripheral zone

The peripheral zone (PZ) is the outermost area and consists of relatively small and round uniformly distributed acini. It has a fibromuscular stroma made up of a meshwork of loosely arranged smooth muscle fibres separated by numerous collagen fibres and irregular spaces. This zone consists of columnar secretory cells with small uniform basal nuclei and regular luminal border. The PZ makes up about 70\% of the glandular part of the prostate. The majority of prostate carcinoma occurs in this zone.\textsuperscript{3,4}

1.2.2 Central zone

The epithelium of the central zone (CZ) consists of a stroma containing muscle fibres closely-packed together and extending to the borders of the acini. The acini in the central zone are large and relatively rectangular in cross section and are separated by the stroma. Irregularly
arranged secretory cells with large nuclei are seen in this zone. There are fewer stromal components in CZ compared to PZ and transition zone (TZ). About 25% of the glandular prostate that surrounds the ejaculatory duct is the central zone. The zone is said to be resistant to cancer and other disease.\textsuperscript{3,4}

1.2.3 Transition zone
The transition zone rests next to the urethra and its morphology resembles that of the peripheral zone. The acini are uniformly distributed and the stroma consists of compactly arranged smooth muscle and collagen fibres. The zone grows with age and is frequently the site for benign prostatic hyperplasia.\textsuperscript{3,4}

1.2.4 Periurethral zone
This zone contains underdeveloped small ducts and acini. Muscle and collagen fibres in the periurethral region are compactly arranged. It makes up just a small fraction of the transition zone.\textsuperscript{3}

1.3 Functions of the prostate gland
The prostate gland has a range of functions including its participation in the control of urine output from the bladder through its mass and musculature. It also aids in the transmission of seminal fluid during ejaculation. As an exocrine gland, it contributes to the seminal plasma by secreting a thick, milky-white fluid which is liquefied by prostate-specific antigen (PSA), an enzyme also secreted by the prostate. The liquefied milky fluid becomes part of the semen. This fluid contains small molecules and enzymes like coagulase and fibrinolysin which help fertility and are involved in coagulation. Prostatic secretion reduces the acidity of urethra and helps to keep sperm viable. The secretion also help improves the motility of sperm. Prostatic acid phosphatase produced by the prostate is directly involved in the nutrition of sperm cells by hydrolysing phosphorylcholine to choline. The prostate helps with the rapid metabolism of testosterone to dihydrotestosterone and appears to be responsible for the high level of zinc in the seminal plasma which acts as an antibacterial agent helping to protect sperms.\textsuperscript{5,6}

1.4 Prostate conditions
The prostate gland is prone to a number of medical conditions but mainly, benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), prostatitis and prostate cancer (PCa).
1.4.1 Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)
Benign prostatic hypertrophy is defined as an increased in number of parenchymal cells and occurs almost exclusively in the transition zone of the prostate gland. The condition is associated with age and around 60% of men aged 60 years and above have a degree of prostate enlargement. Causes are unknown but BPH is thought to be associated with hormonal changes, food and lifestyle. Symptoms include increased urinary frequency and weakened urinary flow as the enlargement places pressure on the bladder and the urethra. Treatment options include lifestyle changes, medications and surgery. BPH does not necessarily increase one’s chance of getting prostate cancer.

1.4.2 Prostatitis
Prostatitis is the inflammation of the tissues of the prostate gland. This can be due to infection (acute) or idiopathic in origin (chronic). Infection is mainly due to *E. coli*. It is estimated that one in seven men will develop at least one episode of prostatitis in their lifetime. Unlike other prostate conditions, prostatitis affects men of all ages (~10%) with majority of incidence present in those in their 40s. Symptoms include pelvic pain and pain on urination. It is managed with medications (e.g. antibiotics and pain killers).

1.4.3 Prostate cancer
In the UK, prostate cancer (PCa) is the most common cancer in men. Early intervention is critical for successful treatment but most men do not seek help until it is too late.

1.4.3.1 Incidence
There is a 40% lifetime risk of developing prostate cancer for a male born in the Western world. The risk of becoming symptomatic is, however, only 10%. About 14% of male cancers are prostate cancers in developed countries compared to 4% of male cancers in less-developed countries. Prostate cancer is the most common solid tumour in Europe accounting for an incidence rate of 214 cases per 1000 men. About 190,000 new cases of prostate cancer are recorded in Europe yearly. There are 21,400 new cases of PCa diagnosed in the UK annually, a rate of 74 cases per 100,000. In England and Wales, one in thirteen men is affected by prostate cancer.
1.4.3.1 Age-adjusted incidence

PCa is rare under the age of 40 and the incidence increases exponentially with age. Age-adjusted incidence rates vary worldwide, with the highest rate found in African Americans (185.4 per 100,000 person-years) whilst the lowest incidence is found in Asian countries (e.g. China, India, Thailand, Pakistan, and Shanghai; 3-7 per 100,000 person-years). Incidence rates in Europe vary (15-100 per 100,000 person-years) and are highest in Western Europe. Incidence data from African countries is sparse with incidence apparently ranging 2-37 per 100,000 person-years).\textsuperscript{19, 20}

1.4.3.2 Mortality

Prostate cancer is the second most common cause of deaths in men in most developed countries.\textsuperscript{16} Higher mortality rates are recorded in Western nations compared to the lower mortality in low-risk Asian countries (Figure 1).\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{mortality_rates.png}
\caption{Age-adjusted prostate cancer mortality rates per 100,000 men in various countries for the year 2000.\textsuperscript{20}}
\end{figure}

Carribean nations with large populations of men of African descent have the highest rate of mortality (30.3-47.9 per 100,000 person-years) and mortality in Asian countries (South Korea, Philippines and Japan) is the lowest (1.6-4.4 per 100,000 person-years).\textsuperscript{19} The disease accounts for about 80,000 deaths per year in Europe.\textsuperscript{17} There has been a slight increase in
death rate since 1985 in most countries.\textsuperscript{16} Death rates have trebled in the last thirty years in England and Wales.\textsuperscript{18}

1.4.3.3 Aetiology

Seventy-seven loci suspected to be associated with PCa development have been identified.\textsuperscript{21} Prostate cancer is thought to be due to a series of genetic mutational events which begins with the loss of tumour suppressive genes like p53 and p21. Mutation of p53 occurs in up to 64\% and that of p21 up to 55\% in prostate tumours. The gene, p73, which has significant homology with p53, also appears to be mutated in many prostate cancers. The most mutated tumour suppressor gene in prostate cancer is MMAC1 / p10 and this may be responsible for acquisition of the metastatic phenotype. Over-expression of mutant p53 and bcl-2 family proteins (regulates apoptosis), as well as amplification of the androgen receptor, appears to be related to the development of the hormone-refractory phenotype of prostate cancer.\textsuperscript{18} The genes RNASEL and MSR1 are linked to some familial clusters of PCa. RNASEL encodes for a ribonuclease enzyme responsible for the degradation of cellular and viral DNA upon infection and MSR1 encodes for subunits of a macrophage scavenger. Four brothers with PCa were found to carry RNASEL alleles with the base substitution 795\textsuperscript{G\rightarrow T}, whilst, in another four of the six affected brothers, it was found that they carried RNASEL alleles with a base substitution 3\textsuperscript{G\rightarrow A}.\textsuperscript{7} Defective MSR1 alleles have been found to be linked to familial PCa and also sporadic PCa cases.\textsuperscript{7} Germline mutation in BRCA2, which has a tumour suppressor role, can also increase the relative risk of prostate cancer by 4.65.\textsuperscript{21-23} It is estimated that between 0.8-2\% of men with early-onset prostate cancer have BRCA2 mutation.\textsuperscript{23} A genetic variant linked with prostate cancer in European and Africans has been identified on chromosome 8q24. This genetic variant occurs at high frequency in African Americans which could explain why the incidence of prostate cancer is high in this group of people. Other important aetiological factors include diet, pattern of sexual behaviour, alcohol, and ultraviolet radiation exposure.\textsuperscript{17}

1.4.3.4 Risk factors

A range of risk factors are implicated in the development of PCa. Some of these risk factors are modifiable (\textit{e.g.} diet, exercise) whilst others are non-modifiable (\textit{e.g.} age, family history).
1.4.3.4.1 Age
Prostate cancer incidence increases exponentially with age, an increase faster than for other malignancies. There is an increase in risk from 0.005% among individuals aged < 39 years to a risk of 2.2% for those aged 40-59 years and 19.7% in those aged 60-79 years. Studies suggest that a 50-year-old male has a lifetime risk of 42% for showing histological evidence of PCa, a 9.5% risk of developing the disease and a 2.9% risk of dying from the disease.

1.4.3.4.2 Family history and genetic susceptibility
The risk of PCa at least doubles if one first-line relative has the disease, increasing by 5-11-fold if two or more first-line relatives are affected. About 9% of individuals with PCa have true hereditary PCa which is defined as having three or more relatives affected or having at least two relatives who developed the disease before the age of 55. Men with positive family history tend to be diagnosed earlier (~6 to 7 years) than those whose first degree relatives are not affected by the disease. Studies suggest that 5-10% of all PCa cases and up to 40% of PCa occurring in men < 55 years may be due to heredity. Men with family history of breast cancer (mutated BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes) have been linked to an increased risk of PCa.

1.4.3.4.3 Diet and physical activities
Exercise has a tendency to decrease the risk of prostate cancer with smoking increasing the risk. The relationship with consumption of alcohol is, however, unknown. Body-mass index and lean body mass are positively correlated to the risk of prostate cancer. Intake of tomatoes (containing the antioxidant lycopenes) and cruciferous vegetables (containing the antioxidant sulforaphane) is found to reduce risk to the disease. Diets poor in selenium and Vitamin E can also increase the risk of PCa. Consumption of soya products with high concentrations of phyto-oestrogens has a protective effect against prostate cancer. Other environmental factors implicated in PCa are high intake of saturated fat and exposure to radiation. Increased total fat intake, animal fat intake and consumption of red meat have been linked with increased risk of prostate cancer. Meats cooked at high temperatures or grilled on charcoal grills produce heterocyclic aromatic amine and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon carcinogens (e.g. 2-amino-1-methyl-6-phenylimidazo[4,5-b]pyridine) which caused prostate cancer when fed to rats.
1.4.3.4.4 Occupation

Studies have shown that farmers and other agricultural workers have a 7-12% increased risk of prostate cancer. This could be due to chemicals encountered in agriculture, such as fertilisers, solvents, pesticides and herbicides which have a variety of poorly characterised effects. Furthermore, people working in heavy industries, rubber manufacturing and newspaper printing may be at increased risk, suggesting that exposure to certain chemicals or other factors may increase the risk of prostate cancer.\(^\text{19}\)

1.4.3.4.5 Sex steroid hormones

There is little evidence to suggest that overexposure to androgens causes human PCa. However, men castrated before puberty tend to have atrophic prostates, which are not prone to PCa.\(^\text{7, 25}\) Relatively high levels of testosterone have been found in African-American men, which might explain the higher incidence of PCa compared to Caucasian men.\(^\text{25}\) Studies in animals have demonstrated that testosterone can promote or even initiate the development of PCa. An explanation given is that through the action of aromatase, testosterone is converted to oestrogens which act as a carcinogen similar to its effect in the development of breast cancer. Supporting this is the fact that several countries with high rates of PCa also have a high breast cancer rates. Caucasians tend to have lower oestrogen levels, compared to African-Americans who have higher PCa rate. Administration of 17β-oestradiol to adult male Wistar rats increased prostatic inflammation.\(^\text{7, 26}\)

1.4.3.4.6 Infections and inflammation

Men with prostatitis display a relative risk of 1.3 towards developing PCa. Men at young ages with high levels of PSA, (probably indicating damage or dysfunction to the prostate epithelium by infection), tend to be at higher risk. A study has shown that men between 40-50 years whose PSA level is greater than 0.6 ng mL\(^{-1}\) have a relative risk of 3.8 of developing PCa. When the prostate of mice is exposed to bacteria and viruses, this triggers immediate inflammatory response and subsequent PCa precursor lesions. Sexually transmitted diseases have been epidemiologically associated with increased risk to PCa. Epstein-Barr virus and the murine retrovirus XMRV have been detected in PCa cells and tissues.\(^\text{7, 27}\) Other risk factors include ethnicity and high bone mass.\(^\text{20}\)
1.4.3.5 Tumourigenesis

Figure 2 shows the different factors that influence the development of PCa. Inflammation of the prostatic epithelium is implicated in the carcinogenesis of PCa. Initial damage to prostate epithelium maybe due to:

- Infection;
- Reactive oxygenative species (ROS);
- Reactive nitrogen species (RNS);
- Dietary carcinogens;
- Oxidative stress.

All these lead to genomic damage. The damage to the prostatic epithelium results in the appearance of lesions termed proliferative inflammatory atrophy (PIA), a precursor to prostatic intraepithelial neoplasia (PIN) and PCa. Epigenetic silencing (GSTP1), telomere shortening and activation of c-Myc gene expression trigger the pathogenic steps of PCa. Hypermethylation of a GSTP1 CpG island, an acquired gene defect that is present in nearly
all PCa cases, seems to occur at the very initiation of transformation between proliferative inflammatory atrophy and prostatic intraepithelial neoplasia or prostate cancer. GSTP1 is a glutathione S-transferase gene responsible for deactivating electrophilic carcinogens. Silencing of this gene by hypermethylation leaves cells with increased vulnerability to carcinogens. Changes in DNA caused by epigenetic gene silencing may be the very earliest changes in the somatic genome.7,28,29 Telomere is involved in stabilising chromosomes by preventing deleterious recombination and loss of DNA sequences. Telomere consists of repeated DNA sequence (5’-TTAGGG-3’) bound to telomere-binding protein at the end of linear chromosomes. The DNA length of telomere can be shortened during cell division due to incomplete replication or as a result of oxidative damage. In normal cells, critically short telomeres trigger the initiation of apoptosis or an irreversible cell cycle arrest. This telomere length monitoring system is said to be inactivated in cancer cells leading to critically short telomeres. This give rise to genetic instabilities such as chromosomal fusion, breakage and rearrangement since telomere can no longer perform its function of stabilising chromosomes. PIN and PCa have been shown to display telomere shortening especially in the luminal epithelial cells.7,30-32 The overexpression of the oncogenic transcription factor, c-Myc protein, is observed in PIN lesions and prostatic adenocarcinomas.33 Further epithelial damage occurs until an epigenetic gene mutation results in creating a transformed cell. Continual epigenetic and genetic instability leads to metastatic carcinoma. Formation of fusion transcripts between TMPRSS2 (an androgen-regulated differentiation gene) and oncogens such as ERG and ETV1 occur. This results in tumour cells opting out of androgen-regulated differentiation which normally suppress cell proliferation. Amplification and overexpression of androgen receptors increases the sensitivity of PCa cells to low levels of androgens thereby making them resistant to androgen deprivation.24

1.4.3.6 Diagnosis

Procedures used in the diagnosis of PCa include:

- Digital rectal examination (DRE);
- PSA blood test;
- Trans-rectal ultrasound (TRUS);
- Needle biopsy.34
1.4.3.6.1 Digital rectal examination

DRE involves the physical examination of the prostate gland to detect signs of tumour growth. When the volume of prostate tumour is about 0.2 mL or larger, it may be detected by DRE as most PCa are located in the peripheral zone of the prostate. Tumours arising in the anterior to the midline of the prostate (up to 40%) is not detected by this diagnostic method. Only tumours located at the posterior and lateral part of the prostate can be detected by DRE. The chance of detection of tumours < 1.5 cm is only 41%. The prostate gland is assessed for nodules, hardening and thickening of tissue. DRE alone can sometimes determine the need for further investigations.

1.4.3.6.2 PSA blood test

PSA is a kallikrein-like serine protease exclusively secreted by the epithelial cells of the prostate. PSA levels greater than the reference range (Table 1) is indicative of prostate disease. The higher the level of PSA in serum, the greater the chance of being diagnosed with PCa. Increases in serum PSA levels do not occur exclusively in PCa. Other prostate conditions such as BPH and prostatitis can result in high PSA levels. Furthermore, some diagnosis of PCa has been made despite low levels of PSA. Serum PSA level is therefore not an absolute diagnostic tool for PCa. For instance, if the usual cut of level of 4 ng mL\(^{-1}\) PSA level is used to determine when further investigations are needed, the specificity of the PSA serum test is only 40%. This means if men with PSA level > 4 ng mL\(^{-1}\) undergo biopsies, about 60% will not be diagnosed as PCa patients. Furthermore, only 30% of men with PSA range of 4-10 ng mL\(^{-1}\) are diagnosed to have PCa. Patients with organ confined PCa tend to give a false negative PSA test results (< 4 ng mL\(^{-1}\)) and 15% of men with PSA levels < 4 ng mL\(^{-1}\) will have PCa. Due to these limitations, several modifications of serum PSA value have been described with the aim of improving specificity of PSA in the early detection of PCa. The age-adjusted PSA levels has been suggested to take into account the effect of age on PSA levels (Table 1). The free / total PSA (fPSA / tPSA) ratio is the modification most widely used in clinical practice to discriminate between BPH from PCa. Men with PCa tend to have a relatively decreased fPSA / tPSA ratio as a
result of lower proportion of fPSA whilst in BPH, the total detectable PSA is lower and hence the fPSA / tPSA ratio higher.\textsuperscript{35} The ratio is mainly used to assess the risk to PCa in men whose PSA levels lie between 4 and 10 ng mL\textsuperscript{-1} with a negative DRE.\textsuperscript{16}

1.4.3.6.3 Trans-rectal ultrasound and needle biopsy
TRUS is used to obtain images of the prostate. Abnormal ultrasonic features include hypoechoic areas, loss of differentiation of zones, asymmetry and capsular distortion.\textsuperscript{27} TRUS is increasingly used to guide transrectal core biopsies which involve examination of the histopathological or cytological of specimens from the prostate gland.\textsuperscript{17, 25}

1.4.3.6.4 Grading and clinical staging
Grading and staging of PCa is used to ascertain the level of tumour development and to help decide on treatment choice. The Gleason grading system (1 → 5) of prostate cancer is based on the extent of glandular differentiation. The sum of two of the most common patterns of tumour growth gives the Gleason score. This ranges from 2, being the least aggressive to 10, the most aggressive.\textsuperscript{16, 18} The most frequently used method to describe the spread of prostate is the TNM (Tumour, Lymph Nodes and Metastasis) staging classification.\textsuperscript{18} Table 2 gives the details of the two classification systems.\textsuperscript{18, 35}
Table 2: Gleason grading and TNM staging of prostate cancer. 18, 35

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gleason grading</th>
<th>TNM staging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 1:</strong> Well differentiated carcinoma with uniform gland pattern.</td>
<td><strong>T1:</strong> Tumour not palpable nor visible by imaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 2:</strong> Well differentiated with glands varying in size and shape.</td>
<td>(a) Incidental finding in &lt; 5% of resected tissue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 3:</strong> Moderately differentiated carcinoma with either (a) irregular acinae often widely separated or (b) well defined papillary / cribriform structures.</td>
<td>(b) Incidental finding in &gt; 5% of resected tissue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 4:</strong> Poorly differentiated carcinoma with fused glands widely infiltrating the prostatic stroma.</td>
<td>(c) Tumour identified by needle biopsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 5:</strong> Very poorly differentiated carcinoma with no or minimal gland formation. Tumour cell masses may have central necrosis.</td>
<td><strong>T2:</strong> Tumour confined to prostate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Involving half lobe or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Involving more than one half of one lobe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) involving both lobes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>T3:</strong> Tumour extends through the prostatic capsule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Extracapsular extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Tumour invades seminal vesicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>T4:</strong> Tumour is fixed or invades adjacent structures other than seminal vesicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Invades bladder neck and/or external sphincter and/or rectum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Invades levator muscles and/or is fixed to pelvic wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>N1:</strong> Metastases in regional lymph node(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>M1:</strong> Distant metastases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Non-regional lymph nodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Other sites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4.3.7 Presentation

Initial stages of PCa are often asymptomatic and are increasingly diagnosed at routine PSA testing and DRE. Symptoms are experienced when about 80% of the tumour has locally advanced or metastasised. Lower urinary tract symptoms are the most common complaint. Renal failure at presentation can occur due to locally advanced tumour obstructing the ureters. Pain and pathological fracture can result from metastasis to the bone. Metastasis to the spinal cord can cause spinal cord compression which leads to symptoms such as urinary and faecal incontinence and limb weakness. Haematuria may occur secondary to infection or damage to
the prostate gland. Weight loss, cachexia, perineal pain and signs of lymphatic obstruction in the form of lymphoedema can occur in advanced disease states.\textsuperscript{18, 27}

1.4.3.8 Management
The management of PCa is dependent on the stage of the disease. The slow progression of PCa means that majority of men can live with the disease without the need for treatment. A range of treatment regimens are available to treat patient with varying degree of disease progression.

1.4.3.8.1 Localised prostate cancer
This refers to tumour confined within the prostate gland. A risk category based on PSA level, Gleason scores and clinical staging is assigned to men with localised PCa. This helps to determine the risk of recurrence and to decide which treatment options are recommended to patients.

1.4.3.8.1.1 Watchful waiting and active surveillance
Watchful waiting and active surveillance involve no active treatment until progression of disease occurs. In watchful waiting, initiation of treatment is dependent on symptomatic progression (symptom-guided treatment), whilst in active surveillance (active monitoring), serial PSA monitoring and TRUS guided biopsy are carried out, allowing regular re-assessment of risk category to inform when treatment should be initiated.\textsuperscript{16, 25, 34}

1.4.3.8.1.2 Radical prostatectomy
This involves the surgical removal of the prostate, seminal vesicles and pelvic nodes if necessary. This treatment option is thought to be the best curative method for men with localised PCa. Radical prostatectomy is proven by a randomised controlled trial to reduce the development of metastases and reduce mortality. Side-effects include impotence (> 29%) and severe stress incontinence (0-15%).\textsuperscript{16, 25, 27, 34}
1.4.3.8.1.3 Radiotherapy

1.4.3.8.1.3.1 External beam radiotherapy (EBRT)
This involves delivery of external radiation to the prostate tumour in daily fractions over 4-8 weeks. Intensity-modulated radiotherapy with / without image guiding is the gold standard of EBRT. It involves incremental delivery of radiation of upto 86 Gy to the tumour whilst reducing radiation risk to surrounding organs. Radiation toxicity to the bladder and bowel is common as these can fall within the field of radiation. Damage to the neurovascular system may result in erectile failure.16, 25, 27, 34

1.4.3.8.1.3.2 Brachytherapy
This is a form of radiation therapy involving permanent implantation of radioactive seeds (low dose rate) or temporary implantation of radioactive wires (high dose rate) directly into the prostate under ultrasound control. Side-effects include impotence (50-60%), urinary incontinence (up to 30%) and bladder damage (10-20%).25, 27, 34

1.4.3.8.1.4 Experimental local treatment
Heating the prostate gland using High-frequency ultrasound (HiFU) or freezing the prostate gland using cryotherapy are used to eradicate prostate cancer.16, 34

1.4.3.8.2 Metastatic prostate cancer
Metastatic prostate cancer has a poor outlook with 90% mortality within 5 years. Androgen withdrawal either surgically or medically can control the disease for several years.27, 34

1.4.3.8.2.1 Hormonal therapy
About 20-30% of prostate tumours will not respond to this form of treatment. Androgen deprivation is achieved through orchidectomy or the use of luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone (LHRH) agonists to reduce testosterone levels to castration levels (< 50 ng dL⁻¹) (Figure 3). Anti-androgens acts at the receptor level in prostate cancer to counteract the effect of testosterone. The combination of androgen deprivation and the use of anti-androgens allows complete androgen blockade.16, 27
1.4.3.8.2.2 Bilateral orchidectomy

Reduction of testosterone levels is achieved by removal of both testes. Common side-effects are hot flushes, loss of libido and impotence.\textsuperscript{25}

1.4.3.8.2.3 Luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone (LHRH) receptor agonists (\textit{e.g.} busereline, gosereline)

These are used to reduce the level of testosterone by over-stimulating the LHRH receptors in the pituitary gland to stop release of luteinising hormone \textit{via} a negative feedback mechanism (Figure 3). The long-term effect of these drugs is to down-regulate LHRH receptors.\textsuperscript{36} This leads to the reduction of testosterone to castration levels within 2-4 weeks. However, about 10% of patients fail to achieve castration levels of testosterone. Reduction in tumour size occurs as well as slowing of the progression of tumour growth. These agents, however, do not eradicate the disease. The initial action of these drugs result in rapid increase in testosterone levels which can result in worsening of symptoms (\textit{e.g.} increased bone pain, spinal cord compression). It is therefore recommended to start these drugs together with anti-androgens for two weeks to reduce the risk of symptom flare-ups. Side-effects of LHRH receptor
agonists include reduction in sex drive and impotence which are reversible on cessation of medication.\textsuperscript{16, 25}

1.4.3.8.2.4 LHRH antagonists (\textit{e.g.} degarelix)
These agents competitively inhibit LHRH receptors in the pituitary gland to bring about reduction of LH and therefore testosterone. One advantage over LHRH agonists is that, these agents do not cause initial surge in testosterone levels and therefore need not to be given together with anti-androgens. Castration levels of testosterone is said to be achieved within \(~3\) d. Serious life-threatening side-effects have been associated with some of these agents.\textsuperscript{16}

1.4.3.8.2.5 Androgen receptor antagonists
Androgen receptor antagonists inhibit the effects of testosterone by blocking androgen receptors on the prostate gland (Figure 3). There are two classes of this group of agents namely, steroidal and non-steroidal anti-androgens.\textsuperscript{25}

\textbf{Steroidal anti-androgens (\textit{e.g.} cyproterone acetate):} This group of drugs are derivatives of hydroxyprogesterone and therefore have progestational properties. In addition to peripherally inhibiting androgen receptors, these drugs inhibit the release of LH and also suppress adrenal activity thereby reducing testosterone levels.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{Non-steroidal anti-androgens (\textit{e.g.} bicalutamide):} These drugs only inhibit androgen receptors without inhibiting the secretion of testosterone.\textsuperscript{16}

Side-effects of these agents include breast enlargement, breast pain and hepatotoxicity. These agents also do not eradicate the disease but only serve to slow the progression.\textsuperscript{16, 25}

1.4.3.8.3 Hormone-refractory prostate cancer
There is no known curative therapy for hormone-resistant PCa. Treatment is symptomatic and aims to improve quality of life and survival. A combination of docetaxel and prednisolone is licensed for treatment of this form of PCa. Docetaxel belongs to the taxane family and brings about apoptosis of cancer cells through inhibition of microtubule depolymerisation.\textsuperscript{34, 37} This therapy also affects highly proliferating cells such as those of the bone marrow and intestinal epithelium as well as the tumour cells. This lack of selectivity results in immunosuppression
and gastrointestinal disorders. The side-effects are such that the use of docetaxel may not be possible if the cancer has progressed to a stage where it is causing significant symptoms. Those who cannot tolerate docetaxel are usually treated with the combination of mitoxantrone and prednisolone.\textsuperscript{25, 34} Cabazitaxel is also licensed to be used with prednisolone / prednisone to treat hormone-refractory PCa. It is normally used in patients who have been on docetaxel containing regimen in the past. Hypersensitivity is a common side-effect with this new drug.\textsuperscript{37}

The newly licensed drug, abiraterone (Figure 4) is a selective inhibitor of androgen biosynthesis which acts by irreversibly blocking CYP17A1 an enzyme involved in the synthesis of testosterone. It is licensed in the UK for use with prednisone / prednisolone for the treatment of metastatic castration-resistant PCa in men whose disease has progressed on or after a docetaxel-based chemotherapy regimen.\textsuperscript{37, 38} Sipuleucel-T is a cellular vaccine designed to stimulate immune response against prostatatic acid phosphatase expressing prostate cancer cells.\textsuperscript{37, 39} The radioisotope radium-223 and the anti-androgen, enzalutamide are also in use to manage hormone resistant PCa.\textsuperscript{40}

Ongoing trials are investigating different agents to treat PCa. These include inhibitors of intratumoural androgen synthesis (\textit{e.g.} orteronel), inhibitors of angiogenesis (\textit{e.g.} cabozantinib, tasquinimod) and immunomodulatory agents (\textit{e.g.} ipilimumab).\textsuperscript{37, 39} Second-line hormonal therapy with oestrogens or estramustin phosphate may give partial response but has not been shown to improve survival.\textsuperscript{27}

1.4.3.9 Novel therapeutic approaches

The lack of curative therapy for PCa and the many downsides with current therapies resulting from their non-selectivity has driven researchers to look into alternative therapies. The naturally occurring cyclopropapyrroloindoled (CPI) anti-tumour antibiotics are represented by CC-1065 and duocarmycin SA. This family also includes duocarmycin A and yatakemycine, which are all derived from the fermentation cultures of \textit{Streptomyces} sp.\textsuperscript{41}

They are very potent cytotoxics with IC\textsubscript{50}s against mammalian cell lines (\textit{e.g.} leukaemia, pancreatic, renal and prostate tumour cell lines) in the picomolar range (Figure 5).\textsuperscript{42, 43} Li \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{43} have shown that in contact with L1210 cells for 3 d, the dose of CC-1065 required for
50% inhibition of growth ($\text{IC}_{50}$) is 0.017 ng mL$^{-1}$ (24.2 pM). These compounds contain a cyclopropapyrroloindole (CPI) DNA-alkylating pharmacophore (Figure 5) and derive their biological activity through selective alkylation in the minor groove of duplex DNA offering a new mode of cancer treatment.$^{41,44,45}$

These drugs, however, have proven to have too many toxic side-effects precluding them from clinical developments. For instance, administration of a single dose of CC-1065 to healthy mice resulted in delayed deaths (50-90 d) caused by hepatotoxicity.$^{46}$ The downsides of the natural products have led to the synthesis of many analogues (adozelesin, carzelesin, KW-2189, and bizelesin). Although these analogues show promising anticancer activities in animal model, all have failed in clinical trials in humans due to myelotoxicity.$^{47-49}$

1.4.3.9.1 Mechanism of the anti-tumour antibiotics

The pharmacophore of these compounds can be divided into the alkylating subunit and the DNA-binding non-alkylating subunit (Figure 5). The anti-tumour antibiotics effect a sequence selective alkylation of double-stranded DNA.
Binding to the DNA is aided by the non-alkylating subunit and occurs in the AT-rich regions of the minor DNA groove. Initial binding is via hydrophobic interactions and van der Waals forces. The binding causes a twist in the tumour antibiotic allowing alignment of adenine N\(^3\) with the electrophilic strained cyclopropane ring. A reversible stereoelectronically-controlled covalent addition of adenine to the least substituted carbon of the cyclopropane ring occurs resulting in the formation of a drug-DNA adduct (Figure 6).

![Figure 6: Alkylation of CC-1065 by adenine N\(^3\).](image)

The seco (non-cyclised) analogues generate the reactive cyclopropane ring in situ via Weinstein-cyclisation before reacting with the DNA (Figure 7). Alkylation at adenine accounts for 86–92\% (duocarmycin A), 90–100\% (duocarmycin SA) and 80–90\% (CC-1065) of DNA alkylation. Minor guanine-N\(^3\) alkylation has been detected.\(^{50-52}\)

![Figure 7: Proposed mechanism for seco-CPI.](image)

### 1.4.3.9.2 Inhibition of macromolecular synthesis and enzymes

Li et al.\(^ {43}\) investigated the biological and biochemical effect of CC-1065 on L1210 leukaemia cells. It was found that CC-1065 inhibited DNA synthesis ten times more than RNA synthesis with protein synthesis being the least inhibited. A concentration of 5.7-8.5 nM was required to inhibit 50\% of DNA synthesis whilst a concentration of 63.9-85.3 nM was needed to inhibit 50\% of RNA synthesis.\(^ {43}\) A similar pattern was observed when the effect of CC-1065 was studied on the B16 cell line.\(^ {53}\) More than 90\% of DNA inhibition in L1210 cells occurred at
CC-1065 concentration of 14.2 µM. The effect on enzymes directly or indirectly involved in DNA synthesis was also investigated. It was found that inhibition of dThd kinase was about 40% at drug concentration of 7.1 µM whilst inhibition of DNA polymerase α was 74% at 1.4 µM. The thermal melting of calf thymus DNA ($\Delta T_m$) was increased by $\geq 31$ deg. C at DNA-drug ratio of 6:9. It was shown that 80% of CC-1065 binds strongly to calf thymus DNA when the CC-1065:DNA ratio was 0.01. Further cytotoxicity studies on L1210 indicated that DNA-bound CC-1065 was far less cytotoxic than the free CC-1065. L1210 cells exposed to CC-1065 at a final concentration of 56.8 pM, experienced 85% growth inhibition. However, pre-mixing CC-1065 with as low as 0.02 µg mL$^{-1}$ calf thymus DNA, 10 min before adding to L1210 cells, resulted in significant reduction in growth inhibition. This effect was dependent on the concentration of calf thymus DNA used. At 0.5 µg mL$^{-1}$, the observed percentage growth inhibition markedly reduced to $\sim$4%.43

1.4.3.9.3 Apoptotic cell death

Cell death by the CPI anti-tumour antibiotics is thought to be through apoptosis. Wrasidlo et al.42 microscopically examined Molt-4 leukaemia cells after exposure to duocarmycin and observed shrinkage and blebbing of the cells with no evidence of lysis. Exposure of Molt 4 and L1210 cells to duocarmycin (10 nM) also revealed characteristics typical of apoptotic cell death including chromatin condensation, fragmentation of nucleus and disintegration of affected cells (50-60%) into apoptotic bodies. Analysis of DNA isolated from Molt 4 cells showed intense endonuclease mediated internucleosomal DNA fragmentations.42,54 This has led to the proposal that sequence alkylation of DNA at internucleosomal sites is responsible for triggering a sequence of signalling pathways that eventually lead to apoptotic cell death.42

Propidium iodide stained flow cytometric analysis of cells treated with analogues of the anti-tumour antibiotics has also confirmed the likelihood of cytotoxicity through apoptosis. Flow cytometry is used to detect extensive DNA cleavage in cells which is characteristic of apoptotic cells. P815 mastocytoma cells incubated with a range of analogues of the anti-tumour antibiotics displayed a high level of DNA cleavage when analysed.55-59

1.4.3.9.4 Structure-activity relationship

A range of studies using the natural CPI anti-tumour antibiotics as well as its analogues especially the CBI (1,2,9,9a-tetrahydrocyclopropa[c]benz[e]indole-4-one) analogues (Figure
have helped established the relationship between the pharmacophore of these agents and their activities.

\[ \text{Figure 8: Alkylating subunits for CPI and CBI analogues.} \]

1.4.3.9.5 DNA-alkylation selectivity

Thermally induced depurination and strand cleavage of labelled DNA after exposure to agents have made it possible to identify sites of alkylation and the relative selectivity of the anti-tumour antibiotics. Sequence selectivity is controlled by the non-covalent binding in the minor groove of AT-rich regions of the DNA and the steric accessibility to the alkylation site which accompanies deep penetration into the AT-rich minor groove. The natural enantiomers (7bR, 8aS) bind to adenine in the 3’ → 5’ direction across adjacent bases. Each adenine N3 alkylation site is flanked by two 5’-A or T bases. The (+)-duocarmycins and (+)-CC-1065 prefer the sequence 5’-AAA > 5’-TTA > 5’-ATA > 5’-ATA. The duocarmycins bind over 3.5 base pairs whilst CC-1065 binds over 5 base pairs. The fourth 5’ base was more likely to be A or T rather than C or G.60-62

The unnatural enantiomers (−) of the duocarmycins and CC-1065 alkylates DNA in 5’ → 3’ direction. This reverse orientation is required for adenine alkylation of the least substituted cyclopropane carbon. (−)-Duocarmycin SA alkylates DNA at 10 × the concentration required for the natural enantiomer whilst (−)-CC-1065 has been shown to alkylate DNA at a rate and efficiency comparable to the natural enantiomer.51,61 Studies have shown that some simplified (−)-CPI analogues either failed to alkylate DNA or did so at a considerably higher concentrations. This effect is also correlated to in vitro cytotoxicity.63,64 The adenine alkylation site for the unnatural enantiomers is flanked by a 5’ and 3’ A or T bases. The sequence preference of (−)-duocarmycin SA is 5’-AAA > 5’-AAT > 5’-TAA > 5’-TAT and that of (−)-CC-1065 is 5’-AAA > 5’-TAA > 5’-AAA > 5’-ATA > 5’-ATA. The second 3’ base from the alkylation site is preferred to be A or T.51,61 The sequence-selective alkylation is dependent on the minor groove shape and size characteristics of an AT-rich sequence which allows shape-selective and shape-dependent catalysis. Nucleosomal DNA has been reported to be accessible, recognised and selectively alkylated by these agents.65 Taq DNA polymerase stop
assays have shown that analogues of these drugs stop activity of the enzyme at adenine rich sites confirming the alkylating site of these agents.\textsuperscript{56, 58}

1.4.3.9.6 Stereoelectronic control of ring opening of cyclopropane

Adenine-N\textsuperscript{3} alkylation by the CPI anti-tumour antibiotics has been shown to occur almost exclusively at the least substituted secondary carbon of the cyclopropane ring. This regioselectivity was investigated by Boger \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{66} using the CBI (1,2,9,9a-tetrahydrocyclopropa[c]benz[e]indole-4-one) analogues of the natural products. It was observed that the difference in alignment of the cyclopropane bond from the quaternary carbon to the secondary cyclopropane carbon and to the tertiary carbon was important in determining the site of reactivity (Figure 9).\textsuperscript{66-68}

For N-Boc-CBI [(8bR,9aS)-\textit{tert}-butyl 4-oxo-9,9a-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]cyclopropa[c]indole-2(4H)-carboxylate], (Figure 9)\textsuperscript{66} the molecular orbital of the secondary cyclopropane carbon (C8b-C9) is aligned perpendicularly to the plane of the cyclohexadienone and, consequently overlaps with the developing \(\pi\)-system of the phenol product. This is in contrast to the bond extending to the tertiary cyclopropane carbon (C8b-C9a) which is almost in plane (13°) with the cyclohexadienone and orthogonal to the developing \(\pi\)-system of the incipient phenol product. This effect is due to having a five-membered ring fused to the cyclopropane ring.

The perpendicular alignment favours nucleophilic attack at the least substituted cyclopropane carbon. This selectivity is due to the stereoelectronic control, rather than the intrinsic electronic preference for ring expansion which would place a developing positive charge on a preferred tertiary carbon versus a secondary carbon. Besides, S\textsubscript{N}2 reactions prefer addition to the least substituted carbon. Furthermore, breaking of the longer and therefore weaker C8b-C9 (1.532 Å) bond is favoured over breaking the C8b-C9a bond (1.508 Å).\textsuperscript{67, 68}
With N-Boc-CBQ (9bR,10aR)-tert-butyl 5-oxo-1,2,10,10a-tetrahydrobenzo[f]cyclopropa[d]quinoline-3(5H)-carboxylate (Figure 9), the plane of the cyclohexadienone equally bisects the cyclopropane ring with bonds to the secondary (C9b-10) and tertiary (C9b-C10a) carbons equally aligned (29°) with the π-system. Thus the available cyclopropane bonds are equally aligned for cleavage. Solvolysis of N-Boc-CBQ therefore occurs with nucleophilic addition to both C10 and C10a.66

Figure 9: Side and 90° rotation view of cyclopropane ring of CBI and CBQ.66
Further evidence to support the role of the fused five-member ring is given by N-Boc-CNA (10bR,11aS)-tert-butyl 6-oxo-2,3,11,11a-tetrahydro-1H-cyclopropa[c]naphtho[2,1-b]azepine-4(6H)-carboxylate) (Figure 10) which has a seven-membered ring fused with the cyclopropane ring.

![Figure 10: Acidic solvolysis of N-Boc-CNA using CF₃CO₂H (0.12 eqv.) in H₂O/THF.](image)

The cyclopropane ring of this compound is nonideally conjugated with the π-system but in addition rises above the plane of the cyclohexadienone resulting in a better steroelectronic alignment of the more substituted carbon for nucleophilic attack. Acidic solvolysis of this compound (Figure 10) resulted in the formation of a single compound with a solvolytic half-life (pH 3) of 0.03 h, compared to 133 h for N-Boc-CBI. Further analysis of the product showed that nucleophilic addition to the cyclopropane ring occurred exclusively at the tertiary cyclopropane carbon rather than the least substituted carbon resulting in the ring expansion product.⁶⁸,⁶⁹

### 1.4.3.9.7 Functional reactivity and biological activity

The acid-catalysed activation of the anti-tumour antibiotics towards their alkylation of DNA led to suggestions that a linear relationship existed between reactivity and cytotoxicity. It was expected that increased electrophilicity of the cyclopropane ring would lead to increased cytotoxicity. Studies, however, reveal that the reverse is true. Agents with higher predicted stability show greater cytotoxicity. A direct relationship has also been established between stability towards solvolysis (pH 3) and biological potency. These observations are likely to be due to the requirement for sufficient stability for effective delivery of the agents to their
intracellular target balanced against the need for sufficient reactivity to alkylate DNA once they reach the target.\textsuperscript{68, 70}

The high solvolytic stability and the consequent high cytotoxicity of the natural anti-tumour antibiotics have been attributed to the fused five-membered ring to the cyclopropane ring. X-ray structures of N-Boc-CBI and N-Boc-CBQ (Figure 9)\textsuperscript{66, 68} show longer cyclopropane bond lengths in N-Boc-CBQ compared to N-Boc-CBI. This longer bond length of N-Boc-CBQ despite its cyclopropane ring being fused with the less strained six-membered ring is said to be due to the idealised conjugation of the ring with the cyclohexadienone $\pi$-system. The ideal alignment of the cyclopropane ring with the plane of cyclohexadienone, when viewed at 90° rotation, helps with this conjugation (Figure 9). When compared to N-Boc-CBI, the constraints by the fused five-membered ring pulls the cyclopropane ring down and to the side, placing the cyclopropane ring at 20° away from the plane of cyclohexadienone. This causes non-ideal alignment and non-ideal conjugation of the cyclopropane ring. This difference is the cause of the observed longer cyclopropane bond lengths, weaker bond strengths, higher solvolytic reactivity ($63 \times$) and therefore lower cytotoxicity ($50 \times$) of N-Boc-CBQ ($IC_{50}$ L1210 = 4 $\mu$M) compared to N-Boc-CBI ($IC_{50}$ L1210 = 0.08 $\mu$M).\textsuperscript{61, 66, 68}

1.4.3.9.8 Influence of the stability of vinylogous amide on reactivity

![Figure 11: Vinylogous amide conjugation.](image)

It has been established that the vinylogous amide (Figure 11) of the alkylation subunit contributes to the unusual stability of the anti-tumour antibiotics. Investigations to ascertain the effect of destabilising the conjugation of the vinylogous amide showed that the degree of conjugation of the cyclopropane and its reactivity is not only due to the geometrical alignment but also depends on the extent of the cross-conjugated vinylogous amide stabilisation (Figure 12).
A typical C-N (c) bond length of a fully conjugated vinylogous amide is 1.312-1.337 Å. A reduction in vinylogous amide conjugation (e.g. increased dihedral angle $\chi_1$) results in an increased bond lengths of the cyclopropane ring (Figure 12). This diminished vinylogous amide conjugation also causes the cyclopropane bonds to be aligned at a more idealised conjugation with the $\pi$-system of the cyclohexadienone and, therefore, increases reactivity. In vitro cytotoxic studies confirmed the correlation between solvolysis reactivity and cytotoxic potency.\textsuperscript{61,68,71}

Investigation of 1,2,9,9a-tetrahydro-1H-cyclopropa[c]benz[e]inden-4-one (CBIn) (Figure 13) which contains a five-membered carbocyclic skeleton lacking the vinylogous amide nitrogen further revealed the importance of this amide. CBIn proved to be 3200 $\times$ less stable than its nitrogen containing CBI counterpart at pH 3 and more reactive ($\times10^3$-$10^4$-fold) at pH 7 where the nitrogen containing CBI is stable. Solvolysis studies revealed no dependency on acid concentration between pH 4-12, demonstrating that alkylation rate of these agents is independent on pH.\textsuperscript{68}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>X-ray bond lengths, Å</th>
<th>N-CO$_2$Me-CBI</th>
<th>N-Boc-CBQ</th>
<th>N-CO$_2$Me-CNA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>1.521</td>
<td>1.528</td>
<td>1.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>1.544</td>
<td>1.543</td>
<td>1.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>1.390</td>
<td>1.415</td>
<td>1.428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>1.372</td>
<td>1.379</td>
<td>1.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X-ray dihedral angle ($\chi_1$)</td>
<td>21.2°</td>
<td>34.2°</td>
<td>86.4°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solvolysis reactivity $t_{1/2}$ (pH 3)</td>
<td>133 h</td>
<td>2.1 h</td>
<td>0.028 h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12: Effects of destabilising the vinylogous amide conjugation.

Figure 13: Structure of CBIn.
The importance of a rigid N² substitution was demonstrated by comparing the above compounds (Figure 14).\textsuperscript{58} Substituting the linking amide with a methylene group results in full vinylogous amide conjugation and an increased stability of the compound. The solvolysis half-life at pH 3 for CBI-CH$_2$-TMI is 3.6 y compared to 230 h for CBI-TMI. Despite this high stability towards solvolysis which is usually correlated to high cytotoxicity, the absence of the linking amide causes a decrease in DNA alkylation efficiency (> 10$^6$-fold) and a decrease in potency (10$^4$-10$^5$-fold).\textsuperscript{71, 72} Replacing the linking amide with the more electron-withdrawing thioamide also causes disruptions of the vinylogous amide leading to increased solvolysis reactivity ($t_{1/2}$ 160 h versus 230 h), reduced alkylation efficiency ($\times$ 10-100) and reduced cytotoxicity (IC$_{50}$ L1210 = 1.1 nM vs 0.02 nM) compared with CBI-TMI. This goes on to establish the linking amide as the optimum linkage unit.\textsuperscript{71}

With the loss of the linking amide in CBI-CH$_2$-TMI, this should lead to a more basic C4 carbonyl and therefore, higher acid-catalysed reactivity. However, this was not the case, further suggesting that reactivity of these agents is pH independent. The results highlight an essential role for the linking amide in the mechanism of DNA alkylation and the need to have a balance between solvolytic reactivity and stability.\textsuperscript{72}
1.4.3.9.10 Effect of relocating the C4-carbonyl group

To investigate the proposal that the DNA alkylation selectivity of these agents is due to an acidic activation of the C4 carbonyl group by a strategically positioned phosphate group, Boger et al. synthesized a series of iso-CIs and iso-CBIs (Figure 15) and analysed their structure-activity relationships. Structural studies of the DNA-agent adducts show that the C4 carbonyl of the natural anti-tumour antibiotics projects out of the minor groove and lies on the surface of the complex, making it accessible to the phosphate backbone. In contrast, the location of the C4 carbonyl in iso-CI and iso-CBI will lead to projection into the minor groove, where it is inaccessible to the phosphate backbone. Solvolysis studies showed that iso-CBI was less stable and 5 x more reactive than CBI. The increase in reactivity was attributed to the diminished vinylogous amide conjugation caused by relocation of the C4 carbonyl group. An X-ray structure showed an increase of the N²-C2a bond length diagnostic of diminished vinylogous conjugation. Evaluation of the DNA alkylation properties of iso-CI and iso-CBI, however, showed that their reactivity was comparable to those of duocarmycin A and CC-1065. Nucleophilic addition to the cyclopropane ring of the iso-CBI also occurred with exclusive addition to the least-substituted carbon. The selectivity of alkylation of the iso-analogues was also similar to their natural analogues. These observations, therefore, do not support the idea that selectivity of alkylation is due to sequence-dependent protonation by the DNA phosphate backbone of the C4 carbonyl but supports the proposal that selectivity is determined by the non-covalent binding to the AT-rich region of the minor groove of the DNA and the steric accessibility to the adenine N³ alkylation site.52,67

1.4.3.9.11 Importance of the cyclopropane ring

Lajiness et al. synthesised an analogue of duocarmycin with modification to the cyclopropane ring. N-Boc-CbBI (Figure 16) was found to be very stable, being unreactive to solvolysis even at pH 1. This increased stability was due to increased vinylogous amide conjugation, confirmed by the diagnostic shortening of the N²-C²a bond length. Reduction of ring strain energy and the non-ideal alignment of the cyclobutane with the cyclohexadienone compared to cyclopropane in N-Boc-CBI also contributed to this increased stability. A cytotoxicity assay, however, showed a 10⁶-fold reduction in cytotoxicity.
compared to the natural products. This further confirmed the parabolic relationship between solvolysis and cytotoxicity.\textsuperscript{70}

These observations in the analogues of the anti-tumour antibiotics has led to the proposal that DNA alkylation is facilitated by DNA-binding induced conformational change of the anti-tumour antibiotics, which disrupts the vinylogous amide stabilisation and, in turn, activates the cyclopropane ring for nucleophilic attack. When the agent is bound to DNA, it adopts a helical conformation which complements that of the minor groove of DNA. The result is a twisting of the $\chi_1$ bond which disrupts the vinylogous amide stabilisation effect and consequently enhances reactivity. $^1$H NMR spectra of DNA-bound duocarmycin SA show a $44 \pm 2^\circ$ twist between the alkylating subunit and the non-alkylating subunit. Most of this twist is due to the $\chi_1$ (20-35$^\circ$) dihedral angle and is greatest within the narrow AT-rich minor groove. This explains the preferential selective alkylation of these agents in this region.\textsuperscript{69,72}

1.4.3.9.12 Reversibility of alkylation
A variety of experiments initially failed to show reversibility of DNA alkylation by CC-1065. The stability of the CC-1065-DNA adduct is considered to be essential to the extreme potency of this agent. Studies have, however, shown that CC-1065-DNA adduct is reversible in non-aqueous experimental conditions. The difficulty of not observing the alkylation reversibility of some CPI agents in aqueous media is partly attributed to their insolubility. In aqueous media, even though reversal of alkylation might occur, the agent stays bound to the DNA. This encourages re-alkylation at the same site without dissociation.\textsuperscript{73}

Warpehoski et al.\textsuperscript{73} investigated the reversibility of alkylation of DNA by CPIs. CPI agents were treated with calf-thymus DNA to obtain the CPI-drug covalent adduct. The reversibility of this adduct was then studied in 0.25 M sodium phosphate buffer (SPB), pH 8.4. A slow recovery rate of CC-1065 from the drug-DNA adduct was observed. At higher temperature (55°C) in a mixture of butanol and 0.25 M SPB, pH 8.4, about 20% of CC-1065 was extracted into butanol after 20 h. At 80°C, CC-1065 was recovered efficiently by extraction into butanol. Studies on adozelesin (a CPI analogue)-DNA adduct at 37°C for 24 h gave a 40% recovery and at 55°C gave 30% recovery in 1 h.\textsuperscript{73} Cytotoxicity studies with CPI-DNA adducts showed that adozelesin-drug adduct was quite potent (40 pM) compared to the free adozelesin (3 pM). This is consistent with the significant reversibility of the adozelesin-DNA adduct. The CC-1065-DNA adduct, however, showed no cytotoxicity at doses 60 times that of
CC-1065. This further proves that, although reversibility of CPI-DNA is possible, this adduct is irreversible under conditions used for cell growth.\textsuperscript{73} The unnatural enantiomers form less stable adducts with DNA and therefore are more easily reversible.\textsuperscript{52}

Lee et al.\textsuperscript{74} have also shown that the interaction between bizelesin (a CPI analogue) and DNA is reversible. The reversibility was observed to increase with temperature (up to \(~80^\circ\text{C}\)), ionic strength and pH. It was also observed that single-stranded DNA-drug adducts undergo depurination in preference to reversal of alkylation. This suggests that conditions that result in instability of DNA (\textit{e.g.} high temperatures) promote the depurination pathway.\textsuperscript{74} Scheme 1 shows two decomposition pathways observed for a DNA-CPI adduct. Above 90°C, the depurination pathway-B which precedes DNA strand cleavage, predominates.\textsuperscript{73}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Scheme 1:} Thermal decomposition of DNA-CPI adduct. A; reversal of alkylation, B; depurination.
\end{center}

\textbf{1.4.3.9.13 Limitations of the natural anti-tumour antibiotics}

The drawbacks to the natural anti-tumour antibiotics are two-fold; their extreme systemic toxicity and their structural complexity which makes them difficult to synthesise. McGovren \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{75} showed that CC-1065 caused lethal delayed hepatotoxicity at therapeutic antineoplastic doses. It was observed that non-tumour-bearing mice died approximately 50 d after a single intravenous dose of 12.5 $\mu$g Kg$^{-1}$ and as much as 70 d after 10 $\mu$g Kg$^{-1}$ was
given intraperitoneally. Higher intravenous doses caused death within 12 d with hepatic necrosis, compared to changes in hepatic mitochondrial morphology when lower doses were given. A subtherapeutic dose of 9 pg Kg\(^{-1}\) also caused delayed deaths (50-90 d) in healthy mice. This delayed lethality was mainly due to hepatotoxicity and peritonitis. Bone marrow depression was also observed. Changes in mitochondrial morphology and function probably due to binding of mitochondrial DNA to CC-1065 have been implicated in the delayed toxicity. Doses of CC-1065 which did not cause delayed toxicity had little anti-tumour activity. Delayed toxicity at very low doses was also seen in rabbits suggesting that this effect is not limited to mice. Death in rabbits was associated with lesions in the liver and kidney.\(^{46,75}\) The use of agents (N-acetyl-L-cysteine) said to protect mice from lethal toxicities from DNA alkylating agents failed to have any effect on CC-1065 lethality.\(^{75}\)

There has been great research into CC-1065 and its analogues in order to understand its structure and activity relationship. Analogues of CC-1065 with modification of the alkylating subunit also result in delayed death.\(^{76}\) The delayed death effect was initially attributed to the presence of two ethylene moieties in the non-alkylating subunit of the molecule (Figure 17).\(^{45}\)

\[\text{Figure 17: CC-1065 structure and activity relationships.}\]

Wang \textit{et al.}\(^{49}\) found that analogues of CC-1065 without the ethylene groups but possessing a terminal amide moiety also caused delayed death in animals. Replacing the terminal amide group with fluorine resulted in a compound that did not cause delayed death.\(^{49}\)

Duocarmycin SA is said to be the most stable and most potent member of the anti-tumour antibiotics lacking the fatal toxicity characteristic of CC-1065.\(^{51}\) This has led to a drive
towards the total synthesis of this compound. Preliminary biological and physiological tests by Nagamura et al.,\textsuperscript{47} however, discovered that duocarmycin SA exhibited an \textit{in vivo} anti-tumour activity only at very narrow range of doses against murine sarcoma 180 and showed very poor water solubility. At a maximum tolerated dose of 0.10 mg Kg\textsuperscript{-1}, duocarmycin SA caused a reduction in tumour volume by 0.21, relative to the control. However, at half this dose, no anti-tumour activity was observed.\textsuperscript{47}

The natural anti-tumour antibiotics are all associated with toxic side-effects mainly myelotoxicities. The toxicity of these natural anti-tumour antibiotics, their limited availability and their structure complexities have led to the synthesis of analogues with similar cytotoxicities but better \textit{in vivo} profiles. Approaches to this include:

- Modification of the alkylating subunit;
- Simplification of non-alkylating DNA binding subunit;
- Design and synthesis of prodrugs.

\textbf{1.4.3.9.14 Modification of the CPI alkylating subunit}

Modifications of the alkylation subunit of these agents have been extensively studied, primarily to establish the structure-activity relationships. Figure 18 shows a range of analogues of the original cyclopropapyrroloindole (CPI) alkylating subunit of the natural anti-tumour antibiotics. The presence of ring-A is essential, since, when absent as in N-Boc-CI, biological activity is reduced. This is likely to be due to the reduced conjugative stability provided by the fused aromatic system.\textsuperscript{67} Cytotoxicity seems to be also dependent on the steric bulk at C6 comparing (+) N-Boc-CPI to (+) N-Boc-DSA. A range of studies have suggested that having ring C as a five-membered ring is the ideal ring size for cytotoxicity.\textsuperscript{52, 61, 70}
Analogues of the alkylating subunits of the anti-tumour antibiotics.

**Figure 18:** Analogues of the alkylating subunits of the anti-tumour antibiotics.

### 1.4.3.9.15 CBIs

1,2,9,9a-Tetrahydrocyclopropa[c]benz[e]indole-4-one (CBI)-based analogues of the anti-tumour antibiotics have been shown to be more stable (4 ×), biologically more potent (4 ×) and considerably more synthetically accessible than the corresponding agents incorporating the natural CPI alkylation subunit.\(^{70, 77, 78}\) Boger *et al.* synthesised CBI-Indole\(_2\) and compared its properties with the CPI analogue, CPI-Indole\(_2\) (Figure 19). The CBI analogue proved to be 4 × more stable to acid-catalysed solvolysis and consequently 4 × more potent than CPI-Indole\(_2\). The rate and intensity of DNA alkylation was also higher for the CBI analogue. Preliminary studies of *in vivo* anti-tumour activity revealed significant activity of CBI-Indole\(_2\) at dosage levels for which there was little activity by CPI-indole\(_2\). These observed differences are attributed to the enhanced availability of CBI-indole\(_2\) due to its increased stability.\(^{78}\) CBI-trimethoxyindole (CBI-TMI) (IC\(_{50}\) = 20 pM) has also been shown to be as cytotoxic as duocarmycin SA (IC\(_{50}\) = 10 pM) in L1210 leukaemia cells.\(^{44}\)
The 5-amino analogues of the CBI have gained popularity due to the ability to form more stable carbamate prodrugs (Figure 20). They have been shown to possess similar biological activity as their hydroxy counterparts. Carbamate prodrugs of the 5-hydroxy-CBIs have been reported (e.g. carzelesin) which are labile in plasma, releasing the corresponding phenol nonspecifically. By providing more stable prodrug, 5-amino-CBI should persist in the plasma but allow specific release in the tumour tissue, ideally by a localised enzymatic activation step.\(^{44}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cell type</th>
<th>5-Hydroxy-CBI-TMI</th>
<th>5-Amino-CBI-TMI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA8</td>
<td>0.21 ± 0.06</td>
<td>0.21 ± 0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UV4</td>
<td>0.09 ± 0.004</td>
<td>0.14 ± 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMT6</td>
<td>0.13 ± 0.01</td>
<td>0.13 ± 0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20: Cytotoxicity (IC\(_{50}\), in nM, 4 h exposure, ±SE) for nitrogen-substituted seco-CBI-TMI analogues. Average of two or more determinations.

Synthesis and evaluation of (+)-5-amino-CBI-TMI showed that it had almost an identical cytotoxicity when compared to its 5-hydroxy counterpart (Figure 20). The amino derivative was also shown to undergo exclusive alkylation at adenine.\(^{44,79}\)
1.4.3.9.16 Modification of the non-alkylating subunit

The rate of alkylation of DNA and the cytotoxicities of the simplified analogues of the natural anti-tumour antibiotics lacking the non-alkylating subunit tend to be lower. This suggests an important role for the non-alkylating subunit in terms of enhancing the rate of alkylation and potency. Many modifications have been made on the non-alkylating subunit with the aim to understand the structure activity relationship and to obtain compounds with better solubility and lower toxicity. 52

Increasing cytotoxicity is observed with increase in size and length of the non-alkylating subunit. 67 In saying this, (+)-CBI-indole 2 exhibits cytotoxic potency comparable to (+)-CC-1065. 77 Studies into the effect of the three methoxy groups of the 5,6,7-trimethoxindole (TMI) group of the duocarmycins, has shown that the substituent at C5 is more important than those at the other positions (Figure 20). C5 methoxy substituents alone provide fully active agents, with little or no input from the C6 and C7 methoxy group. NMR structures of DNA-bound duocarmycin and its analogue lacking the three methoxy groups showed that the presence of the methoxy group at C5 increases the twist in the DNA-bound agent. 52 Further studies into the effect of C5 substitution was made by Parrish et al. 50 It was observed that a variety of substituents in this position had different effects on potency. For instance, when C5 had a hydroxy-substituent, there was a 4-fold reduction in potency but 5-fold increase in cytotoxicity was observed when the C5 substituent was an ethoxy group. 50, 67

Investigations to find ways of improving the cytotoxicity and aqueous solubility of these agents led to Millbank et al. 80 synthesising a series of amino-seco-CI analogues with varying non-alkylating subunit. One of the non-alkylating subunit was dimethylaminoethoxyindol-2-carboxylic acid (DMAI) which retains a 5-alkoxy substituent for enhanced cytotoxicity and also contains a dimethylaminoethyl group to improve solubility. Biological and solubility assays showed that the analogue with the DMAI subunit was more potent across a range of cell lines compared to the analogue with C5 methoxy group. Solubility was also considerably increased in the DMAI analogue (Figure 21). 80, 81
Figure 21: Effects of DMAI non-alkylating subunit. a Solubility in 0.1 M phosphate buffer (pH 7.0) at room temperature. b IC\textsubscript{50}; concentration of drug to reduce cell numbers to 50% of controls following a 4 h drug exposure. Average of 2-5 determinations ± SEM.

### 1.4.3.9.17 Prodrugs

The anti-tumour antibiotics are unquestionably very potent. However, these agents lack intrinsic selectivity for tumour cells over normal cells. This undesired toxicity limits the efficacy of these agents. The design and synthesis of prodrugs to selectively deliver these agents to tumour cells is therefore very important.

#### 1.4.3.9.17.1 Tumour-activated produgs

Design of agents selectively activated within the target reduces toxicity and increases targeting. Tumour-activated prodrugs involve the design of non-toxic prodrugs where the therapeutic effect of the drug is masked until activated by unique phenotypic differences within the tumour environment. This activation can be enzymatic, chemical, spontaneous or a combination of these and allows the prodrug to undergo selective cellular metabolism.\textsuperscript{82,83} In general, tumour-activated prodrugs (TAPS) consists of a trigger, a linker and an effector (Figure 22).
The trigger controls selectivity and is joined to the effector which is the active agent through a linker.\textsuperscript{82,83} In order for this strategy to work, there are a number of requirements the prodrug has to meet: \textsuperscript{84}

- Relatively stable \textit{in vivo};
- Less molar toxicity compared to active drug;
- High volume of distribution into tumour tissues;
- Efficient selective activation.

1.4.3.9.17.2 Enzyme-based activation of prodrugs

Enzyme based activation of prodrugs includes antibody-directed enzyme prodrug therapy (ADEPT), gene directed enzyme prodrug therapy (GDEPT) and prodrug monotherapy (PMT).\textsuperscript{85}

1.4.3.9.17.2.1 ADEPT

This concept introduced by Bagshawe in 1987\textsuperscript{86} is a promising approach to selective delivery of drugs to cancer cells. It involves administration of an enzyme conjugated to a tumour
specific antibody which localises the enzyme at the tumour. A prodrug is then administered which acts as a substrate for the enzyme, resulting in the release of free drug at the tumour site thereby ensuring selective delivery of the drug.⁵²,⁸⁷

Tietze et al.⁸¹ developed a prodrug of a duocarmycin analogue, the activation of which depended on the ADEPT concept (Figure 23). The cytotoxic potency of the prodrug was very low (IC₅₀ = 3600 nM), compared to that of the prodrug in the presence of the activating enzyme β-galactosidase (β-Gal) (IC₅₀ = 0.75 nM).⁸¹

![Chemical structure of prodrug and drug](image)

**Figure 23**: Activation of a duocarmycin analogue via the ADEPT concept.⁸¹

This approach to selective delivery of drugs is, however, very complex as two separate agents and a time interval between their administration are required for their efficacy.⁵² The ADEPT approach also tends to be expensive and the selected monoclonal antibody and enzyme must be able to cope with possible immune response.⁸⁸

### 1.4.3.9.17.2.2 GDEPT

This concept is similar to ADEPT, the difference being that the activating enzyme is introduced to the tumour through a gene delivered by a vector. Once expression of the enzyme occurs, a prodrug can be given, which is then selectively activated in the tumour. Ideally, the enzyme needs to be expressed exclusively at the tumour site compared to normal tissues or blood. The concentration and catalytic activity of the enzyme should also be sufficient to activate the prodrug under physiological conditions. A bystander effect is also desirable to kill neighbouring cells since not all tumour cells will express the enzyme. This requires that, after activation of the prodrug, the active drug kills both the tumour cells in
which activation occur as well as neighbouring tumour cells. The enzyme can be of non-mammalian origin or human origin where the enzyme is expressed at low concentration or is absent from the tumour cells. For enzymes of non-mammalian origin, the major drawback is their immunogenicity. With the human enzymes, their presence in normal tissues precludes selective activation unless modifications are made to the substrate requirements of the enzyme.  

### 1.4.3.9.17.2.3 PMT

Prodrug monotherapy involves the exploitation of an intrinsic enzyme which is up-regulated in malignant tissues to selectively activate a prodrug. Endoproteases are frequently up-regulated in tumour tissues as a consequence of tumour expansion or are sometimes a necessity for tumour expansion. One such enzyme is the prostate-specific antigen (PSA), which is exclusively expressed within the prostate and is able to cleave short peptide sequences, making it a good target for PMT. Peptide-conjugated prodrugs can therefore be designed to be activated by PSA to achieve selectivity.

### 1.4.3.9.17.3 Prostate-specific antigen (PSA)

Prostate-specific antigen also known as human kallikrein 3 (hK3) is a serine protease with chymotrypsin-like specificity. PSA (Mw 33,000) is a single-chain glycoprotein. The enzyme is secreted by normal and malignant cells of the prostate gland and leaks into circulation in higher proportion in prostate cancer. The level of PSA is elevated in prostate tumours and is more proteolytically active compared to normal prostate tissues which lack detectable PSA enzyme activity. The majority of the enzyme molecules that leak into circulation are complexed with protease inhibitors present in serum which are at a 10⁴-10⁵-fold molar excess. These inhibitors include α-1-antichymotrypsin (ACT), α-2-macroglobulin (A2M) and α-1-trypsin inhibitor (API). The protease inhibitors bind in such a way as to cover the active site of the enzyme, thereby inhibiting enzymatic activity (Figure 24). This means that PSA enzymatic activity is restricted to the prostate where it is secreted.
About 1-10% of the enzyme that leaks into circulation in prostate cancer patients is said to be, however, free and active. The function of PSA is to dissolve the gel formed after ejaculation and thereby permit movement of sperm in the female genital tract. The enzyme achieves this via selective cleavage of semenogelin at specific amino-acid sequences. Isolation of the digestive fragments of semenogelin by PSA has made it possible to produce PSA cleavage maps for human semenogelin I. It was observed that the peptide bond between Gln and Ser at positions 349 and 350 in semenogelin I was the most readily cleaved bond. Modifications of the amino-acid residues surrounding this bond led to the synthesis of a heptapeptide (N-glutaryl-(4-hydroxyprolyl)-Ala-Ser-cyclohexylglycyl-Gln-Ser-Leu-OH) which is selectively cleaved by PSA. Studies have shown that the peptide His-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-OH (HSSKLQ) is also a PSA-specific peptide substrate that is efficiently and selectively cleaved by the enzymatic activity of PSA. With this knowledge, one can design a peptide prodrug that is activated by PSA within the prostate to achieve selective delivery of the drug to prostate tumour.

1.4.3.9.17.3.1 PSA-cleavable prodrugs

Based on the PSA-cleavage map for semenogelin I and II, Denmeade et al. synthesised a range of small peptides (≤ 7 amino-acids) and coupled their carboxyl terminus to 7-amino-4-methyl coumarin (AMC). This allowed monitoring of cleavage of the constructs by PSA, which results in increased fluorescence due to the release of the coumarin. The six-amino-acid
sequence HSSKLQ proved to be a good substrate with high degree of specificity for PSA over other peptidases. It also showed a good stability in sera even in men with elevated PSA levels and in human plasma, compared to other sequences especially those with tyrosine at the cleavage point which proved to be better substrates for other serine proteases, such as chymotrypsin and elastase. The only other enzyme with the ability to hydrolyse this peptide sequence significantly apart from PSA is cathepsin B, an intracellular lysosomal protease. This enzyme is, however, not significantly present in the extracellular fluid of normal cells but is substantially elevated around cancerous cells including prostate cancer cells. Hydrolysis by cathepsin B therefore provides another mode of selective cleavage of this peptide sequence within prostate tumours. The shorter amino-acid sequence SKLQ-AMC showed a higher $K_m$ but had the same $K_{cat}$-$K_m$ ratio and same serum stability when compared to HSSKLQ-AMC. SKLQ-AMC was also less soluble. The amino-acid sequence KLQ showed detectable cleavage whilst the two amino-acid sequence LQ-AMC showed no detectable cleavage at 5 mM concentration.99

Covalent linkage of the PSA cleavable peptide N-glutaryl-(4-hydroxyprolyl)-Ala-Ser-cyclohexylglycyl-Gln-Ser-Leu-OH) to doxorubicin led to the creation of a prodrug hydrolysed by PSA. In the presence of PSA-secreting prostate cells, the prodrug was hydrolysed to release leucyl-doxorubicin and, subsequently, doxorubicin, both of which are cytotoxic to tumour cells. Incubation of this prodrug with non-PSA-producing prostate cells resulted in less cytotoxicity compared to doxorubicin. The use of both the prodrug and doxorubicin at their maximally tolerated dose in nude mice showed that the prodrug was fifteen times more effective at inhibition of tumour growth than conventional doxorubicin. An eight-to-nine-fold molar equivalent dose of this prodrug could be administered in vivo without additional toxicity compared to doxorubicin.82, 97 In vitro activity studies of the prodrug against human PSA-producing prostate cancer cells (LNCaP) proved that the concentration required to kill 50% of tumour cells was twenty-fold lower (EC$_{50}$ = 5 nM) than that required in non-PSA-producing prostate cancer cells such as DuPRO and PC3 (EC$_{50}$ = > 100 nM). This suggested that the activation of the prodrug was PSA-specific. The prodrug also reduced the weight of LNCaP tumours by 90% compared to doxorubicin which reduces tumours weight by just 6%. The concentration of doxorubicin in tumour from the prodrug was also higher than that from doxorubicin indicating the enhanced selective delivery of the drug to the target.96, 97
Denmeade et al.\textsuperscript{100} also developed a PSA-activated thapsigargin prodrug, consisting of a primary amine-containing thapsigargin analogue coupled to PSA-specific peptide HSSKLQ. It was observed that not only was this prodrug effective against PSA-producing prostate cancer cells \textit{in vitro} but also it had the ability to induce apoptosis in both lowly and highly proliferating cells.\textsuperscript{100} Prostate cancer cell lines PC3 and DU145, however, have demonstrated the capacity to develop resistance to the cytotoxic effect of thapsigargin.\textsuperscript{101} 5-Fluorodeoxyuridine has, in the same way been coupled to HSSKLQ and showed to have a remarkable inhibitory effect on tumour cells with little toxicity when given intravenously.\textsuperscript{91}

Kumar et al.\textsuperscript{94} developed paclitaxel prodrugs by coupling to PSA-cleavable peptides 2’-Mu-HSSKLQ or 2’-MuSSKYQ \textit{via} an ethylenediamine (EDA) linker to give 2’-MuSSKLQ-EDA-paclitaxel or to 2’-MuSSKYQ-EDA-paclitaxel respectively (where Mu = morpholinocarbonyl protecting group). These compounds proved to be stable to degradation both in plasma and serum showing < 3\% and < 2\% degradation, respectively. The prodrug also showed improved solubilities (up to 70 mg mL\textsuperscript{-1}, ~38 mM) compared to paclitaxel (0.00025 mg mL\textsuperscript{-1}, ~0.29 \textmu M). The half-life of the compounds in the presence of PSA was 10 h for 2’-MuSSKLQ-EDA-paclitaxel and 6 h for 2’-MuSSKYQ-EDA-paclitaxel. Incubation of 2’-MuSSKYQ-EDA-paclitaxel with a range of cell lines for 96 h showed a 3-5 fold increment in cytotoxicity (IC\textsubscript{50} ~1\textmu M) in CWR22Rv1 PSA-producing prostate cell line than in the non-PSA-producing cell lines Du145 and TSU (Figure 25).\textsuperscript{94}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure25.png}
\caption{2’-MuSSKYQ-EDA-paclitaxel effects on a range of cell lines.\textsuperscript{94}}
\end{figure}
1.4.3.9.18 Self-immolative linkers

Insertion of a linker between the trigger and effector of a prodrug system is sometimes necessary. Directly linking the trigger to the effector (the parent drug molecule) in a prodrug system can reduced enzyme accessibility to the trigger due to steric hindrance caused by the bulky parent drug molecule resulting in lower rate of enzymatic hydrolysis.\textsuperscript{102-104} After cleavage by the requisite enzyme, the linker-drug conjugate undergo self-immolation to release the drug. Elimination and intra-molecular cyclisation are among the most widely used self-immolation mechanisms (Figure 26). The rate of self immolation depends on:

- Nucleophilicity of the trigger group;
- The leaving ability of the drug;
- And the size of the ring formed.

![Figure 26: Mechanism for self-immolation of linkers.](image)

The pKa of the masked nucleophile is essential to the rate of cyclisation. Aliphatic amines which are usually adopted as the trigger group, have a pKa of 9-11 and normally requires higher than physiological pH for optimal cyclisation. A study comparing hydroxylamine which has a lower conjugate acid pKa (~5.9) to aliphatic amine demonstrated that having a hydroxylamine as the trigger group resulted in a faster release of drug. This is explained by the fact that, at physiological pH, the majority of the aliphatic amine will be present in its protonated state, with reduced nucleophilicility compared to the hydroxylamine.\textsuperscript{103}

1.4.3.9.18.1 ADEPT based linkers

Using the ADEPT concept to investigate the effect of having a linker between the trigger and effector components in a prodrug system, Schuster et al. developed a β-D-galactosidase activatable prodrug of a duocarmycin analogue (Figure 27).\textsuperscript{102}
The prodrug was shown to be stable over 24 h at pH 7.4 and 37°C with no cleavage of carbamate bonds and no generation of the free drug. The IC$_{50}$ of the prodrug was 29 nM whereas in the presence of β-D-galactosidase the IC$_{50}$ was 1.3 nM. The IC$_{50}$ of the prodrug in the presence of the enzyme is comparable to the IC$_{50}$ of the free drug (0.75 nM). This suggests that in the presence of the enzyme there is an efficient cleavage of the glycosidic bond and subsequent self-immolation to generate the free drug. DNA alkylation studies showed that the prodrug was not reactive towards DNA. Even at higher prodrug to DNA ratio of 3:1, the prodrug did not alkylate DNA.$^{102}$

1.4.3.9.18.2 PMT based linkers

The design of prodrugs to be activated by exopeptidases (especially carboxypeptidases) allows cleavage of peptide-based prodrugs directly from the C-terminal of short peptides. Endopeptidases on the other hand, cleave between amino-acids leaving pendant amino-acids attached to the drug.$^{105}$ The PSA-recognised sequence His-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln↓Aaa is cleaved by PSA at the point shown ↓. PSA, being an endopeptidase, tends not to release drugs directly from the C-terminal of short peptides.$^{104, 105}$ This means that attachment of drug directly to the cleaving point of the amino-acid sequence can result in inefficient release of the drug since drug molecules are still attached to one or more amino-acid units which may or may not affect the desired pharmacological activity of the drug.$^{100, 105}$ For example, the doxorubicin prodrug developed by DiPaola et al.$^{96}$ was released as Ser-Leu-doxorubicin by the action of PSA. It was then left to aminopeptidases to produce the biologically active-forms Leu-doxorubicin and doxorubicin.$^{96}$ To address the problem whereby the presence of a
pendant amino-acid(s) attached to the released drug would diminish activity, self-immolative linkers can be interposed between the drug (effector) and the PSA-recognised peptide sequence (trigger). In this system, after the release of the linker-drug unit, the linker decomposed spontaneously to expel the drug.

1.4.3.9.18.3 Non-peptide linkers
Kumar et al.\textsuperscript{94} synthesised a series of paclitaxel prodrugs linked to a PSA-cleavable peptide via the self-immolative linkers 4-aminobenzyl alcohol (PABA) and ethylenediamine (EDA). The half-life for hydrolysis by PSA of PAB-containing prodrugs ranged from 12-14 h releasing the PSA-cleavable peptide and free paclitaxel.

![Figure 28: PSA cleavable paclitaxel prodrugs.](image)

The cleavage product PABA-paclitaxel was not detected, demonstrating an instantaneous self-immolation of the linker to release the drug after PSA activation. The PABA linker was, however, unstable to non-specific hydrolysis in serum and plasma. This was attributed to the weak carbonate bond between PABA and paclitaxel. The EDA linker contains a carbamate bond with paclitaxel and proved to be stable in serum and plasma. The EDA containing prodrugs also showed improved PSA hydrolysis with a half-life 6-10 h.\textsuperscript{94}

1.4.3.9.18.4 Dipeptide-based linkers
Dipeptide-based linkers are cyclisation-based linkers that undergo intra-molecular cyclisation to release the drug. These linkers consist of a masked nucleophile that attacks the carbonyl of the –C(O)-X-Drug function after the action of the enzyme to cleave the trigger.\textsuperscript{83}

1.4.3.9.18.4.1 Proline-based dipeptide linkers
Investigations into antibody-drug conjugates led to the development of a novel linker by Manabe et al.\textsuperscript{104} consisting of Gly-Pro dipeptide which forms a diketopiperazine when cyclised. The formed diketopiperazine is normally stable and non-toxic. This linker was incorporated into plasmin-cleavable paclitaxel prodrugs and biologically evaluated. Prodrugs
were found to be cleaved by plasmin within 24 h. A prodrug with a Gly-L-Pro linker released 39% of paclitaxel whilst only 15% of paclitaxel was released after 3 h when the linker was substituted with Gly-D-Pro. Plasmin-cleavable paclitaxel prodrug without the linker showed only 9% of drug release after 3 h.\textsuperscript{104}

Brady \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{107} also designed a vinblastine prodrug with the dipeptide, Ser-Pro, as the self-immolative linker. After the enzyme (PSA) cleavage, the linker undergoes intra-molecular cyclisation to form diketopiperazines (DKP), releasing the drug in the process (Scheme 2).\textsuperscript{83}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Scheme 2:} Mechanism of drug release by cyclisation-based linkers.
\end{center}

The proportion of the dipeptide linker in the \textit{cis}-amide conformation determines the rate of DKP formation (Figure 29). Most peptide sequences adopt the energetically favourable \textit{trans} conformation; however proline is unique that as a tertiary amide, it can readily adopt a \textit{cis}-amide conformation. The presence of proline increases the proportion of the dipeptide adopting the \textit{cis}-amide conformation, thereby increasing the rate of DKP formation and therefore the release of the active drug.\textsuperscript{83,104} The enhanced reactivity is due to the fact that the \textit{cis}-amide conformation places the exposed nucleophile in close proximity to the electrophile unlike the \textit{trans}-amide conformer.
1.4.3.9.18.4.2 Pseudoproline based linkers

The pseudoprolines such as 5,5-dimethyl-4-thiaproline (Dmt) and 5,5-dimethyl-4-oxaproline (Dmo) (Figure 30) have been used in place of proline and found to force peptides into 100% cis-amide conformation.\textsuperscript{106,108} These peptides have mostly included S-Dmo or R-Dmt.\textsuperscript{106,108} It has been shown that Dmt dipeptides in the L,S diastereomeric series cyclise faster (\textit{e.g.} L-Val-S-Dmt: $t_{1/2}$ pH 8.0 =15 min, pH 7.0 = 45 min) compared to those in the L,R series (\textit{e.g.} L-Val-R-Dmt: $t_{1/2}$ pH 8.0 = 1600 min, pH 7.0 = > 2700 min).\textsuperscript{105,106} An attempt by Suaifan \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{105} to incorporate Dmt in a peptide chain as the dipeptide, L-Val-S-Dmt, proved impossible since cyclisation into DKP was faster than coupling of L-Val-S-Dmt to other amino-acids. This effect was even observed when the amino group of L-Val was in the protonated form.\textsuperscript{105} Furthermore, it has been shown that generation of Dmt within a growing peptide chain (\textit{i.e.} Aaa-Cys → Aaa-Dmt) is not possible as reaction only occurs at the sulfur.\textsuperscript{105}

![5,5-dimethyl-4-thiaproline](image1.png) ![5,5-dimethyl-4-oxaproline](image2.png)

\textbf{Figure 30:} Structures of R-Dmt and S-Dmo.

Dmo has been frequently used as a masked form of serine to avoid solubility and aggregation problems that arise during peptide synthesis. It can be constructed within a peptide chain by treatment of Aaa-Ser or Aaa-Thr with 2,2-dimethoxypropane under acidic conditions.\textsuperscript{109} This cyclic amino-acid causes peptides to adapt the cis-amide conformation and should encourage cyclisation and self-immolation after release from a prodrug system when used as a self-immolative linker.\textsuperscript{105,110,111} With an appropriate selection of a self-immolative linker, drug release should be rapid at the tumour site and reduce the diffusion of the linker-drug intermediate outside the tumour site causing non-specific delivery of the drug.

1.4.3.10 Enhanced permeability and retention effect (EPR)

Differentiating between normal cells and tumour cells is one of the main challenges facing the development of selective chemotherapeutic drugs. EPR is one of the few tumour specific characteristic that allows selective delivery of macromolecules to tumour sites. The EPR effect has been shown to be universal for solid tumours. In an effort to increase nutrient and oxygen supply, tumours undergo extensive angiogenesis resulting in hypervasculature. The vascular system and the lymphatic drainage system become defective and impaired. There is an increase in permeability mediators such as bradykinin and nitric oxide as part of the
mechanism to increase nutrient and oxygen to tumour cells. The process results in tumour tissues being supplied with leaky blood vessels compared to normal cells (Figure 31).\textsuperscript{112, 113}

![Figure 31: Anatomical differences between normal and tumour tissues.\textsuperscript{114}](image)

To enhance further the selective delivery of drug to tumour cells, the enhanced permeability and retention effect (EPR) can be exploited. Macromolecules are preferentially taken up by solid tumours due to the poor tissue drainage and increased tumour permeability of tumour tissue (Figure 31). Macromolecules delivered to the interstitial space of tumour tissues are cleared very slowly leading to accumulation at higher concentration of macromolecules over a prolonged period. Exploitation of these abnormalities of the tumour vasculature can deliver drugs selectively to tumours leading to enhanced therapeutic benefits as well as fewer systemic side-effects.\textsuperscript{112, 114}

Most of the anticancer agents in use are of low molecular weight, exhibiting short plasma half-lives and high overall clearance. The small size of these molecules means they diffuse quickly into both normal tissues and tumour tissues. This result in relatively small amounts of drug reaching the tumour site calling for a higher dose to be administered which in turn results in increased side-effects.\textsuperscript{115} Developing drugs linked to a macromolecule with molecular weight of \(~20\) KDa or above is expected to facilitate the EPR effect.\textsuperscript{114}
1.4.3.10.1 Drug-polymer conjugates

Conjugation of polymer to drugs with low molecular weight is one means of exploiting the EPR effect. Various polymers have been used as carriers of anti-cancer drugs, such as doxorubicin. An optimal polymeric drug carrier system would ideally be water-soluble, biocompatible and non-toxic. The use of polymeric carrier systems not only improves water solubility but also improves bio-distribution and plasma clearance of the drug.\textsuperscript{115,116}

Seymour \textit{et al.},\textsuperscript{117} investigating the biodistribution of N-(2-hydroxypropyl)methacrylamide (HPMA) co-polymer-conjugated doxorubicin, observed that it showed a preferential localisation in tumour tissues 10-15 times more than that achieved using free doxorubicin administered at equal doses (5 mg of doxorubicin per Kg). The selective delivery of this polymer-conjugated doxorubicin meant that toxicity was low allowing elevated doses (18 mg of doxorubicin per Kg) to be administered which achieved levels of drug in the tumour, 45-fold higher than that resulting from the standard dose of free doxorubicin (5 mg Kg\textsuperscript{-1}). The polymeric doxorubicin also showed a lower volume of distribution and longer plasma half-life than free doxorubicin.\textsuperscript{117}

Vasey \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{118} undertook a phase 1 clinical and pharmacokinetic study on doxorubicin bound to N-(2-hydroxypropyl)methacrylamide (HPMA) copolymer through a lysosomally cleavable peptide linker. It was found that, despite the administration of higher doses, typical anthracycline-like toxicities were attenuated. For instance, with prophylactic 5HT\textsubscript{3} antiemetic administration, nausea and vomiting was found not to pose any problem. Furthermore, only 8% of patients (3 of 36) experienced grade 2 alopecia and there were no incidences of congestive cardiac failure.\textsuperscript{118}
To enhance the delivery and solubility of a PSA-cleavable peptide prodrug of a potent thapsigargin analogue-L12ADT, Chandran et al.\textsuperscript{119} conjugated the peptidyl prodrug with HPMA copolymer (Figure 32).

![Figure 32: PSA-cleavable polymeric L12ADT prodrug- HPMA-SSKYQL-12ADT.](image)

Stability studies which incubated the polymeric prodrug in human plasma did not show appreciable levels of L12ADT suggesting that the prodrug is stable to non-specific hydrolysis. PSA hydrolysis studies showed that the prodrug was cleaved by the enzyme to release the active drug. Cytotoxic assay was undertaken using the human prostate cancer cell line CWR22R. This cell line was shown to produce low percentage of enzymatically active PSA (≤ 5% active) \textit{in vitro}. Therefore, in the absence of exogenous PSA, the polymeric prodrug did not show any cytotoxicity. Addition of exogenous active PSA (final concentration of 5 µg mL\textsuperscript{-1}), however, showed a concentration-dependent growth inhibition. \textit{In vivo} studies to evaluate the uptake and release of active drug involved administering the polymeric prodrug to mice bearing the PSA-producing CWR22R-H xenografts. Intravenous doses of the polymeric prodrug were given either as a single injection or 4 × daily. After a single dose, a ~3-4 fold higher in concentration of L12ADT was detected in tumour tissues, compared with plasma or skeletal muscle. After four consecutive doses, the plasma concentration of the released drug was similar to the concentration observed when single dose was administered (Figure 33).\textsuperscript{119}
On the other hand, the concentration of drug in the tumour (~350 nM) was ~15-fold higher than in plasma and and 3.5-fold higher than the concentration in skeletal muscles. This confirmed the viability of the EPR effect by developing a small molecular weight drug into a macromolecule enabling increased tumour targeting.\textsuperscript{119}

\subsection*{1.4.3.10.2 PEGylated prodrugs}

Polyethylene glycol (PEG) (Figure 34) is an amphipilic molecule with its hydroxy end-groups easily derivatised. This allows easy coupling of PEG to other molecules. In aqueous environment such as the plasma, each ethylene oxide monomer within PEG is able to bind to 2-3 water molecules. This layer of water molecules formed around PEG is said to be responsible for its ability to keep away cells and proteins from its surface giving the polymer properties such as:

- Reduced immunogenicity;
- Reduced antigenicity;
- Resistance to enzyme degradation.

The degradation product of low molecular weight (MW) PEG (< 400 Da) is said to be toxic whilst no evidence of such toxic metabolites has been observed from higher MW PEG (> 1000 Da). Due to the good safety profile of high MW PEG, these have been used in food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic products. \textit{In vivo} clearance of PEG is through urine and faeces (MW > 20 KDa) without structural change to the polymer.\textsuperscript{120-122}

\textbf{Figure 33:} Levels of L12ADT at 24 h after i.v. injection of HPMA-SSKQL-12ADT into nude mice bearing s.c. PSA-positive CWR22R-H xenografts.\textsuperscript{119}
PEGylated proteins possess better clinical features compared to unmodified proteins. These include resistance to proteolysis, increased solubility, improved chemical/thermal stability and being shielded from the immune system. PEGylation also prolongs the circulation of these agents, a feature attributed to the reduced clearance of these agents from the circulation system by kidney filtration. PEGylation often results in marked reduction in potency of drugs and can therefore be exploited in the development of a prodrug if PEG is released as part of the activation process. For instance water soluble PEGylated paclitaxel-7-carbamates showed $10^3$ less activity than the free paclitaxel in vitro and were non-toxic in mice.

PEG has also been used to develop prodrugs of small cytotoxic molecules in other to exploit the EPR system for selective delivery. These drugs include taxol, camptothecin and doxorubicin. PEGylation results in the properties of PEG being transferred to the conjugated drugs leading to improved properties such as increased solubility and improved pharmacokinetics. A PEG-peptide-doxorubicin prodrug (Figure 35) designed to be activated by lysosomal thiol-dependent protease (triosomes) was synthesised by Veronese et al. PEG of molecular weight of 5-20 kDa was used. In vitro assay showed that the PEG-peptide-doxorubicin was 10-100 fold less toxic (IC$_{50} =$ > 2µg mL$^{-1}$) than free doxorubicin (IC$_{50} =$ 0.24 µg mL$^{-1}$) against B16F10 cells. Conjugates with higher MW PEG had a longer circulation in the blood after intravenous injection due to reduced renal clearance compared to free doxorubicin. This led to increased tumour targeting leading to higher tumour doxorubicin concentration. All PEG conjugates had a longer plasma half-life.
Despite the highest MW PEG conjugate showing greater tumour levels, the PEG_{5KDa} had the most favourable tumour to heart ratio which is important in the case of doxorubicin since cardiotoxicity is a known dose-limiting toxicity. It was also observed that release of the drug by lysosomal enzymes was dependent on the peptide linker and had little dependency on the PEG carrier. *In vivo* studies using mice bearing subcutaneous B16F10 murine melanoma, showed that PEGylated peptidyl doxorubicin was more active than free doxorubicin which showed no significant anti-tumour activity.\textsuperscript{123}

The use of a polymeric-peptide-prodrug system to achieve selective delivery to prostate tumour allows dual targeting based on EPR effect and protease activation. The EPR effect ensures that macropolymeric prodrug selectively accumulates in tumour tissues. Activation of the prodrug by PSA occurs in the extracellular fluid surrounding tumour cells. Prodrugs are therefore not required to penetrate tumour cells before being activated. The presence of active drug within the extracellular fluid will allow a bystander cytotoxic effect on both PSA-positive and negative cancer cells since not every cell in the tumour will be required to produce PSA before coming into contact with the active drug. This has a potential to reduce the chances of resistance developing.\textsuperscript{119}
2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Aims

The project aims to develop a polymeric prodrug system, which will deliver highly potent drugs selectively to prostate tumours. The Enhanced Permeability and Retention effect (EPR) ensures that water-soluble polymers, such as PEG, accumulate in solid tumours (e.g. prostate cancer).\textsuperscript{112,114} Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) has been shown to be catalytically active only in the prostate.\textsuperscript{35,93,94} Conjugating a drug to a polymer via a PSA-cleavable peptide will create a polymeric prodrug system with two modes of selectivity. The polymeric prodrug system that this project aims to develop will consist of a CBI anti-tumour antibiotic analogue precursor (\textit{seco}-CBI) 3 attached to PEG through a PSA-cleavable peptide (SSKLO) with or without a molecular clip (Leu-R-Dmo) to form the polymeric prodrugs 1 or 2 (Figure 36).

![Figure 36: Proposed \textit{seco}-CBI and the corresponding polymeric prodrugs.](image)

2.2 Objectives

The project will proceed in three stages:

- Chemical synthesis and cytotoxic evaluation of the proposed CBI drug to be delivered selectively;
- Synthesis and evaluation of an advanced model to test PSA-triggered release of the CBI drug;
• Assembly and in vitro preliminary evaluations of the polymeric prodrug for PSA-triggered delivery of the CBI drug.

The proposed CBI drug comprises of a CBI alkylating subunit and 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carboxylic acid (DMAI) as the non-alkylating DNA-binding subunit. DMAI is involved in extra non-covalent binding to the minor groove of DNA. CBIs have been extensively studied and have shown to be more stable, more potent and more synthetically accessible than the corresponding CPIs. The proposed CBI drug is a modification of a 5-hydroxy-CBI drug synthesised by Tietze et al. to allow linkage to the peptide delivery system through an exocyclic nitrogen rather than oxygen. This will allow an amide to be formed with the PSA-cleavable peptide, which will be more stable than would the corresponding ester. Substituting the 5-OH with an amine has been shown not to be deleterious to the activity of the CBI drug. The DMAI non-alkylating subunit is chosen for ease of synthesis (Scheme 3). The tertiary amine also has the advantage of enhancing water solubility as the corresponding salt. The indole core of will be synthesised using a Fisher-like indole synthesis. An alkoxy substituent will then be introduced at the C5 position of the indole.

Scheme 3: Synthesis of the alkylating subunit of proposed seco-CBI drug.

Synthesis of the CBI drug will be achieved via the key naphthalene intermediate which will be accessed through nitratated naphthalene derivatives. Reduction of the nitro groups
followed by orthogonal protection of the amino groups and substitution of the 1-position with iodine will give 67. The ideal protection at the ortho-amino group of 67 will be small and more electronegative than the protection at the para-amino group. This will enable selective alkylation at the ortho-amino group with either 2R,3S-3-methyl-2-(4-nosyloxymethyl)oxirane or allyl bromide to give 4 or 104, respectively. The homochiral nosylate reagent will be synthesised using Sharpless epoxidation to give the epoxy alcohol, followed by functionalisation of the hydroxyl group into the nosylate. A metal-mediated cyclisation of 4 will form the pyrrolidine ring of 5. Efforts will be made to introduce an extra methyl group at position-10 of the CBI drug 3 using this synthetic route (Figure 36). This methyl group through steric hinderance will be expected to reduce reactivity of the seco-CBI by preventing direct alkylation at C10. This will contribute to the expected reduction in the cytotoxicity of the prodrug compared to the spirocyclised active drug.\(^{125}\) The hydroxyl group of 5 will then be converted to the chloride using a Mitsunobu-like reaction with retention of configuration. Deprotection of the N\(^3\) protecting group will then allow coupling to the DMAI non-alkylating subunit to give 7. With 104, free-radical cyclisation with TEMPO trap will be explored to synthesise the pyrrolidine ring. The 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine will then conveniently act as a protecting group of the hydroxyl group of 105. Removal of the N\(^3\) protecting group and coupling to the non-alkylating subunit will be followed by reductive removal of the 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine group to unmask the hydroxyl group. Substitution of the hydroxyl with chloride will give the protected seco-CBI 135. Removal of the remaining protection on the C5 amino group of 7 and 135 will give the final seco-CBI.

DNA alkylation studies will be carried out on the synthesised seco-CBI to ascertain the effect on the melting temperature on calf-thymus DNA. This will inform the extent of DNA alkylation and also the effect of the drug upon DNA alkylation. The degree of shift in the DNA-melting temperature of calf-thymus DNA will show the potency of the seco-CBI. An MTS cytotoxicity assay will also be carried out on prostate cancer cell lines using 3 as well as the protected precursors 7 and/or 135. Cytotoxicity tests on 7 and/or 135 will help predict the effect of conjugating the seco-CBI drug 3 to the peptide to form a prodrug.

An advanced model to test PSA-triggered release of the synthesised CBI will firstly involve synthesis of a non-cytotoxic model drug with an aromatic amine group and coupling to the peptide, Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln, which contains the amino-acid sequence Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln, claimed to be the minimal sequence required for recognition and cleavage by PSA.\(^{99}\) The peptide-model drug conjugate will be incubated with PSA and the mixture examined by
HPLC to measure the rate of release of the model drug. This will give an insight into whether PSA can cleave the aromatic amine model-drug directly from the peptide as reported.\textsuperscript{99} If the release is poor, the molecular clip, Leu-Dmo (2,2-dimethyl-1,3-oxazolidine-4-carboxy, analogue of proline) will be inserted between the peptide and model drug. This will allow PSA (an endopeptidase) to cleave between Gln and Leu-Dmo and release the Leu-Dmo-model-drug. The molecular clip is designed to then detach spontaneously, releasing the free drug.

Following on from this, the peptide-model drug complex will be linked to poly(ethylene glycol) at the N-terminal of the peptide. This polymer has extensive use in prodrug development due to its non-toxicity, non-immunogenicity and excellent pharmaceutical properties.\textsuperscript{120-122} The polymer comes in a variety of molecular weights but for the purposes of exploiting the EPR effect, molecular weight of 20,000 Da will be used.\textsuperscript{114} Preliminary trials to couple the peptide-model drug to the polymer will, however, involve PEG of 5,000 Da molecular weight. The polymer comes as the diol, with both ends having a hydroxy group and in a version where one of the ends is capped with a methyl group. This will give the possibility of attaching the peptide–model-drug to one or both ends of the polymer after functionalising the hydroxy group(s) into a nosylate. The polymeric-peptide-model-drug conjugate will then again be subjected to enzymatic assay for release of the model drug.

Once the polymeric prodrug concept has been proven, coupling of the synthesised CBI drug to the PSA-cleavable peptide will take place followed by assessment of cytotoxicity of the peptide-CBI drug complex against a range of prostate tumour cell lines. Cytotoxicity assay in non-PSA-producing cell lines such as Du145 and TSU will inform on the toxicity of the CBI prodrug whilst cytotoxicity assay in PSA-producing cell lines such as LNCaP and CWR22Rv1 will inform on the PSA-mediated release of the CBI drug.\textsuperscript{94} The peptide-CBI prodrug will further be linked to PEG (20,000 Da) and subjected to further \textit{in vitro} evaluations.
3 Results and discussion

The limited range of chemotherapeutic treatments for prostate cancer and the lack of intrinsic selectivity of most of these drugs has created a need to develop more selective novel agents to target prostate tumour. The anti-tumour antibiotics CC-1065 and the duocarmycins belong to a class of agents with high cytotoxicity to various tumours including prostate tumour cell lines. These agents have been, however, precluded from clinical use due to toxic effects such as myelosuppression and delayed death in the case of CC-1065. These compounds are also not easily synthetically accessible.

Scheme 4: Retrosynthesis of proposed polymeric prodrug system.
1,2,9,9a-Tetrahydrocyclopropa[e]benz[e]indole-4-one (CBI)-based analogues of the anti-tumour antibiotics have been shown to be more stable (4×), biologically more potent (4×) and considerably more synthetically accessible than the corresponding agents incorporating the natural cyclopropapyrroloindole (CPI) alkylation subunit.\textsuperscript{70, 77, 78} Synthesis of the CBI-analogue will be followed by developing of a polymeric prodrug system for selective delivery to prostate tumours. The proposed polymeric prodrug 1 or 2 (Scheme 4) consists of a seco-CBI drug attached to one or both ends of the water-soluble polymer, PEG, \textit{via} a peptide linker designed to be cleaved selectively by PSA. PSA has been shown to be able to cleave aromatic amines (\textit{e.g.} 7-amino-4-methylcoumarin) directly from PSA-cleavable peptides.\textsuperscript{99} Direct attachment of drug to the PSA-cleavable peptide 2 will therefore be investigated. However, direct attachment of drug to the cleavage point of the peptide linker sometimes results in inefficient release of the drug. For instance, a peptide prodrug of doxorubicin was released as leucyl-doxorubicin.\textsuperscript{82, 97} To avoid situations where pendant amino-acid(s) attached to drugs can be deleterious to the activity of the drug, insertion of a self-immolative molecular clip between the PSA-cleavable peptide and the drug 1 will be investigated. In this way, enzymatic cleavage is followed by self-immolation of the pendant molecular clip to release the active drug. The synthesis of the polymeric prodrug system began with the synthesis of the proposed CBI drug followed by biological assay to investigate the potency of the drug and finally the synthesis of the prodrug.

### 3.1 Synthetic approaches to the CBI “warhead”

There are various approaches to the synthesis of the CBI analogues of the natural anti-tumour antibiotics. The synthesis of CBI is divided into two parts namely; the synthesis of the alkylating subunit (“warhead”) and the synthesis of the non-alkylating subunit. Access to the alkylating subunit has proven much more challenging than the non-alkylating subunit. Most of the difficulties have centred on efforts to functionalise the pyrrolidine ring of the benz[e]indole core to introduce a hydroxymethyl group. The hydroxy group can be subsequently substituted to a better leaving group such as chlorine, which is necessary for spirocyclisation to form the highly reactive cyclopropane ring. The majority of the investigations into the synthesis of CBI alkylating subunit have involved the 5-hydroxy analogues. Below is a review of some of the synthetic approaches adopted in the synthesis of the CBI “warhead”.


3.1.1 Synthesis of the key intermediate of the 5-hydroxy-CBI derivatives

Boger et al. developed a synthetic route to access the 5-hydroxy analogue of the CBI alkylating subunit (Scheme 5). Starting from the commercially available 1,3-dihydroxynaphthalene, reacting with ammonia gave 1-hydroxy-3-naphthylamine, followed by Boc-protection of the amine to give 9. Orthogonal benzyl protection at the hydroxyl group followed by electrophilic bromination with N-bromosuccinimide gave the key intermediate 10. Introduction of a range of alkylating groups at the N position allows the synthesis of the pyrrolidine ring of the CBI alkylating subunit.

3.1.2 Post- and pre-cyclisation functionalisation of the CBI pyrrolidine ring

Initial efforts to synthesise the hydroxymethylindoline involved post-cyclisation functionalisation of the pyrrolidine ring to introduce the hydroxymethyl group (Scheme 6). Treatment of the sodium salt of 10 with 3-bromopropyne followed by a 5-exo-dig aryl
radical–alkyne cyclisation when treated with tri-butyltin hydride and azobisisobutyronitrile (AIBN) gave the unstable 1-methylenebenzindoline 11. Hydroboration-oxidation of 11 gave the hydroxymethylindoline 12 and chlorination was effected with triphenylphosphine and carbon tetrachloride to give 13. Challenges faced with this synthetic route include partial / complete isomerisation of methylenebenzindoline to 1-methylbenz[e]indole on chromatographic purification. Besides, the cyclisation reaction proved very reliant on reaction time and the concentration of tri-butyltin hydride used and therefore stringent adhesion to reaction conditions was required.127

Another way of accessing the hydroxymethylindoline involves pre-functionalisation of the alkylation group before cyclisation (Scheme 6). This method has the advantage of avoiding the challenges faced with post-cyclisation functionalisation.126 Boger et al.128 alkylated 10 with 1-bromo-3-methyl but-2-ene to give 14. Ozonolysis with subsequent reductive workup gave 15. Treatment of 15 with [(2-tetrahydropyranyloxy)-methylene]triphenylphosphorane introduced a vinyl ether group to give 16. Free-radical cyclisation was effected with tributyltin hydride and AIBN. Removal of the tetrahydropyranyloxy protecting group afforded the hydroxymethylindoline 12. Substitution of the hydroxy group of 12 with chlorine gives 13 as the alkylation subunit to be coupled to the non-alkylating subunit. This synthetic route, however, has the constraint of having to incorporate the hydroxy functionalisation into the acceptor alkene before cyclisation and also requires carefully defined reaction conditions (ozonolysis) and subsequent Wittig reaction with a functionalised methylenetriphenylphosphorane. An easier and simpler synthetic route to 12, will be to incorporate functionality during cyclisation.128

3.1.3 In situ functionalisation of the CBI pyrrolidine ring

Scheme 7: Synthesis of CBI pyrrolidine ring with TEMPO trap. Reagents and conditions: i. NaH, BrCH₂CHCH₂, DMF, 0 → 25°C, 3 h; ii. Bu₃SnH, TEMPO, benzene, N₂, 70°C, 105 min; iii. Zn, AcOH / THF / H₂O (3:1:1), 70°C, 2 h.
The functionalisation of the pyrrolidine ring during cyclisation works better with iodine at C1 in contrast to bromine at this position.\textsuperscript{128} O-Benzyl protection and electrophilic iodination of 9 gave 17 (Scheme 7). Alkylation of 17 with 1-bromoprop-2-ene gives 18. Treatment of 18 with tri-butyltin hydride and TEMPO gives 19 with the incorporated protected hydroxy functionality. Reduction of the tetramethylpiperidine by reductive cleavage of the N-O bond exposes the hydroxy group, which can be subsequently substituted with chlorine to give 13. This method avoids the need of pre- or post-cyclisation functionalisation to introduce the hydroxy group, since the TEMPO trap incorporates this functionality during cyclisation.\textsuperscript{128}

3.1.4 Metal-mediated cyclisation

Tietze et al.\textsuperscript{81} synthesised the CBI alkylation subunit 23 in their investigation into the design of a prodrug based on the ADEPT concept (Scheme 8). Alkylation at the N\textsuperscript{2} position of 17 with (2R,3S)-2,3-epoxy-1-nitrobenzenesulfonyloxybutane afforded 21 followed by a metal-mediated cyclisation to give 22 with the hydroxy functionality revealed during the reaction. Using the Appel reaction, the hydroxy group of 22 was replaced with chlorine to give 23. Removal of the Boc group of 23 allowed coupling to a range of non-alkylating subunits.

This synthetic route offers the prospect of enantiopure synthesis. The methyl group at position-10 of 23 was introduced in order to reduce the chance of direct reaction of the seco-compound with the DNA which would be detrimental to the design of prodrugs. The design of prodrugs with these agents relies on the reduced reactivity of the seco-analogue compared to the spirocyclised CBI. By introducing the methyl group at position-10, the primary alkyl chloride was transformed into a secondary, sterically hindered chloride, discouraging intermolecular reaction.\textsuperscript{125} The introduction of the extra methyl groups results in a new stereogenic centre absent in the natural products. It has been observed that, when the two stereogenic centres of CBI drugs incorporating the alkylation subunit 23, are syn (1S/10S or 1R/10R) the seco-CBI drug possesses a low toxicity and is not suitable for development as a prodrug, whilst the anti-orientation (1S/10R or 1R/10S) leads to the appropriate properties.\textsuperscript{124}
Furthermore, a CBI incorporating the (+) (1S,10R) diastereoisomer of 23 has been found to be more active (IC₅₀ = 0.75 nM) compared to the (−) (1R,10S) diastereoisomer (550 nM) against human bronchial carcinoma cells (A549).⁸¹,¹²⁴,¹²⁹

3.1.5 Synthesis of the 5-amino CBI derivatives

A CBI prodrug incorporating the alkylating subunit 13 (Scheme 6) with the 5-hydroxy group functionalised as O-galactoside prodrug showed an unexpected high cytotoxicity ([IC₅₀ = 4.8 nM (A549)]) in the absence of the activating enzyme (β-D-galactosidase) compared to the activated analogue ([IC₅₀ = 0.15 nM (A549)]). This observation was partly attributed to non-enzymatic cleavage of the galactoside and highlights the need for a more stable prodrug.¹²⁵ Carzelesin, a 5-hydroxy-CPI carbamate prodrug, is labile in plasma, rapidly releasing the active drug. Preparation of a more stable prodrug that persists in the plasma but allows specific release within the tumour by localised enzyme(s) is desirable.⁴⁴ The 5-amino-CBI derivatives are said to possess the same biological properties as the hydroxy-CBI. One advantage of the amino-CBI is their ability to form more stable amide prodrugs.⁷⁹ The synthesis of the amino-seco-CBIs are, however, very challenging. The synthesis of such an amino-CBI was carried out by Yang et al.⁷⁹ Starting with 2,4-dinitrophenthalen-1-ol, they undertook a sequence of synthesis [triflation, SNAr displacement with iodide, reduction (with loss of iodine), protection with Boc₂O and restoration of the iodine)] to access 25 (Scheme 9).

Discriminating between the two nitrogens of 25, however, proved difficult. Non-selective allylation of 25 was therefore undertaken followed by free-radical cyclisation with TEMPO entrapment. Removal of the TEMPO group followed by substitution of the hydroxy group with chlorine gave 27. The final steps in the synthesis of the amino-CBI involved removal of the N³-Boc protecting group and coupling of the alkylating subunit to the non-alkylating subunit followed by removal of the 5-allyl group, a step which proved challenging.⁷⁹
synthetic route which allows easier discrimination between the nitrogens is, therefore, highly desirable. Efforts will be made in the present study to distinguish between the $N^2$ and $N^4$ amines of 25 to afford a more selective alkylation at the $N^2$ amine which will enhance the efficiency in the synthesis of the proposed CBI drug.

### 3.2 Synthesis of the alkylation subunit of the proposed CBI drug

The synthesis of the proposed CBI drug has two parts, namely, synthesis of the alkylation subunit and synthesis of the non-alkylating subunit. The synthesis of the alkylation subunit proceeds via a naphthalene derivative 67 with an iodo-substituent at position-1 and orthogonally masked amines at positions-2 and -4 (Scheme 10). Selective alkylation at the $N^2$ of 67 with the appropriate group will allow a cyclisation reaction to be performed to generate the five-membered pyrrolidine ring. There will be two approaches to this. Firstly, enantiopure synthesis will be attempted by alkylation $N^2$ with an enantiopure epoxide followed by metal-mediated cyclisation to give 5 (Scheme 3). The second approach will be based on racemic synthesis by adopting free-radical cyclisation to give 105 (Scheme 3) after introducing an allyl group at $N^2$ of 67. Deprotection at the $N^2$ of 5/105 will then allow coupling to the non-alkylating subunit to give the proposed CBI drug. The masked amine at position-5, once deprotected will be coupled to a poly(ethylene glycol) via a PSA-cleavable peptide linker to form the polymeric prodrug.
3.2.1 Mono-nitration of naphthalene-1-ol

An initial attempt was made to synthesise 2-nitronaphthalene-1-ol 29 (or 4-nitronaphthalene-1-ol 30) by mononitration of naphthalene-1-ol 28 (Scheme 11). The expected nitration at the 2- or 4-positions of naphthalene-1-ol was based on the ortho/para-directing effect of the mesomerically electron-donating hydroxy group. Furthermore, since nitro groups are mesomerically electron-withdrawing and deactivating, it was expected that dinitration should proceed slowly if at all. The rationale was to introduce a nitro group at one of these positions of naphthalene-1-ol 28 and then to reduce to the amine and protect this group. A second nitro group would then be introduced, reduced and protected with a different (orthogonal) protecting group. This will help to avoid the issue of selectivity which arises when using a dinitro-naphthalene-1-ol. This approach, however, was unsuccessful as multiple nitration occurred with formation of many products, which were impossible to separate. A new approach was adopted to access naphthalene-1-ol derivatives with orthogonally protected amino groups at the 2- and 4-positions.
3.2.2 Selective nitration of 4-aminonaphthalen-1-ol

4-Aminonaphthalen-1-ol hydrochloride 31 presents a molecule with an amino group already present at position-4 (Scheme 12). Introduction of a second amino group at position-2 after protection of the 4-amino group will give an intermediate with orthogonal amino groups. Benzyloxycarbonyl (Cbz) protection of the amino group of 4-amino-naphthalen-1ol 31 was undertaken using benzyl chloroformate in the presence of a base to give 32. Selective protection of the amino group over the phenolic group is based on the superior nucleophilicity of the amino group under mildly basic conditions and also due to the stable carbamate product formed. The presence of an amide-like protection at the 4-amino group also had a secondary purpose. Both the hydroxy and amino group of 31 are ortho/para directing. Protection of the amino group therefore serves to deactivate somewhat the directing effect of the amino group, thereby allowing selective nitration at the position ortho to the phenolic group. Selective nitration at the position ortho to the hydroxy group of 32, however, proved difficult. The rationale was that once nitrated, the nitro group could then be reduced and the resulting amine protected with an orthogonal protecting group after substituting the hydroxy group with iodine to give the key intermediate 67. Attempts to nitrate benzyl N-(4-hydroxynaphthalen-1-yl)-carbamate 32 using nitric acid as a mild nitrating agent resulted in a product mixture that included 34. This suggested that dinitration as well as oxidative deamination had occurred. The use of one equivalent of potassium nitrate, together with trifluoroacetic acid, as a source of the nitronium ion was investigated. Nitration of 32 with this reagent, however, resulted in oxidative deamination as well, but without nitration at the desired position to give 35. Direct
nitration of the starting material 4-aminonaphthalen-1-ol hydrochloride 31 was undertaken with the rationale that, once in acidic medium, the amino group will stay protonated, deactivating nitration at the position ortho to the amino group and thereby allowing selective nitration at position-2. This effort also resulted in the oxidised product 35 without the desired nitration. Scheme 13 shows the proposed mechanism for the oxidative deamination.

Scheme 13: Proposed mechanism of oxidative deamination of 31.

Nucleophilic attack on the generated nitronium ion by the phenolic group of 31 results in nitration at the phenolic oxygen to give 36. Delocalisation of electrons from the amino group results in an elimination process which releases nitrous acid / nitrite ion. Hydrolysis of the iminonaphthalenone salt 38 with loss of ammonia produces naphthoquinone 35. In the case of using excess nitric acid as the nitrating agent, the reaction proceeds further with the naphthalene ring undergoing an electrophilic substitution with the nitronium ion to give 34. The fact that 35 was obtained when one equivalent of the nitronium species was used (KNO₃), suggests that nitration at the phenolic group and the subsequent oxidative deamination precedes nitration of the naphthalene ring. These challenges faced with this synthetic route led to investigation into other ways of accessing the key intermediate 67 in the synthesis of the proposed CBI drug.
3.2.3 Attempted nucleophilic displacement of triflate group with iodide in 4-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (38)

With the commercial availability of 2,4-dinitronaphthalen-1-ol 24 as the dye Martius Yellow, the question was asked if selective reduction of one of the nitro groups could be achieved. If possible, then protection of this amino group followed by substituting the hydroxy group with iodine and then subsequent reduction / protection of the remaining nitro group will give access to the key intermediate 67. An extensive literature search suggested that selective reduction of the 4-nitro group was possible.\(^{130}\)

The nitro group at position-4 of 2,4-dinitronaphthalen-1-ol 24 was selectively reduced under ethanolic acidic conditions with tin(II) chloride (3 equivalents) to give 40 (Scheme 14). The temperature of the reaction had to be controlled to less than 30°C in order to avoid over reduction. The phenolic group appears to be involved in the protection of the ortho-nitro group from reduction. Similar reduction of 1-methoxy-2,4-dinitronaphthalene led to a product mixture of nitro-amines.\(^{130}\) A stabilising effect by coordination or hydrogen-bonding between the phenolic group and the 2-nitro group [(precluding simultaneous co-ordination of Sn(II)] may be responsible for the non-reduction of the ortho-nitro group of 24. 4-Amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-ol 40 was treated with di-\textit{ tert}-butyl dicarbonate and a catalytic amount of 4-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP) at room temperature. This surprisingly resulted in the acylation of the phenolic group rather than of the amino group to give 41 in a yield of 17%. The 4-dimethylaminopyridine acts to activate di-\textit{ tert}-butyl dicarbonate as a better electrophile. In this instance, it seems also to have acted as a base to deprotonate the acidic phenolic group which was made more acidic by the adjacent electron-withdrawing nitro group. This meant that the phenoxide generated was more nucleophilic than the amino group and, at room
temperature, reaction of the phenolic group is favoured over the amino group. The low yield of 41 is partly due to the unstable nature of the carbonate group formed by acylation of the phenol. The reaction was repeated without 4-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP). Using di-tert-butyl dicarbonate and heating under reflux gave the desired product 42. Treatment of 42 with trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride in the presence of pyridine as a solvent and base converted the phenolic group into a triflate 43. The use of excess base in this reaction was essential since trifluoromethanesulfonic acid is generated in the reaction and might deprotect the acid-labile BocNH. The triflate group serves as a better leaving group to aid the next step of the synthesis which was to undertake a nucleophilic substitution of the triflate with iodine. It was also hoped that the presence of the nitro group will activate the molecule to nucleophilic substitution. This nucleophilic aromatic substitution (S_NAr) takes place via the addition and elimination mechanism and not by direct substitution. It is essential to have an electron withdrawing group ortho and/or para to the leaving group in order to accommodate and stabilise the negative charge from the nucleophile through inductive effect or conjugation. The importance of this requirement is best shown by comparing the 13C NMR of the carbocation and carbanion intermediates of benzene131 (Figure 37).

![Figure 37: Carbocation and carbanion intermediates of benzene and their 13C NMR shifts (ppm).](image)

As can be observed from Figure 37, the chemical shift for the meta-carbon of both ions differs only slightly from the chemical shifts corresponding to the benzene carbons. However, there is a significant downfield shift for the ortho- and para-carbons of the benzene cation and a significant upfield shift for the ortho- and para-carbons of the benzene anion. It is very clear from these results that the ionic charges are delocalised mainly on the ortho- and para-carbons. This means that, in nucleophilic aromatic substitution, the electron-withdrawing activating group, such as the nitro group of 43, must be on the ortho- or para-carbons to have
any stabilising effect on the generated anion.\textsuperscript{131} Several attempts using a range of reaction conditions, however, failed to give the iodinated product 44. Sodium iodide and potassium iodide were used as sources of the iodide, different dry solvents were investigated (ethyl acetate, dimethylformamide, dimethylsulfoxide) and a range of temperatures (\(\leq 90^\circ\text{C}\)) were tested. In all these circumstances the phenolic product 42 was obtained. Scheme 15 shows the proposed mechanism for this reaction and also the mechanism of the desired SNAr reaction.

![Scheme 15: Proposed mechanisms of iodination of 43 and regeneration of 42.](image)

It appears that the single nitro electron-withdrawing group does not make the 1-position sufficiently electrophilic for nucleophilic attack by the iodide ion. The lack of sufficient electron-withdrawing groups on the aromatic ring of 43 allows an alternative reaction. The iodide attacks the best remaining electrophile in the molecule, which is the triflate sulfur.

### 3.2.4 Reduction of the aryl triflate

Following the failure to substitute the triflate group of 43 with iodine, attempts to remove this group reductively to form 46 were investigated (Scheme 16). Iodine could then be introduced through electrophilic substitution with N-iodosuccinimide. Deoxygenation of phenolic hydroxy groups is challenging due to their stability. The triflate group increases the leaving ability of the aryl oxygen of 43.\textsuperscript{132} Mori et al.\textsuperscript{132} have shown that dissolving magnesium in methanol, in the presence of palladium on charcoal as the catalyst, can reduce aryl triflates to generate the corresponding arenes. The source of hydrogen in this reduction is the acidic hydrogen atom of the methanol. Methanol was chosen due to the enhanced reactivity of magnesium with this solvent. Other protic solvents (e.g. ethanol, propan-2-ol) capable of being hydrogen donors failed to produce a reaction.\textsuperscript{132} Mori et al.\textsuperscript{132} have proposed that the reaction proceeds via an initial single-electron transfer from Pd\(^0\) to the aromatic ring of the
aryl triflate to give a radical anion. Elimination of trifluoromethanesulfonate (OTf) anion gives rise to an aryl radical. A second single electron transfer from Pd$^I$ to the aromatic ring takes place to give an aryl anion followed by protonation from methanol to give the deoxygenated product together with Pd$^{II}$ which is reduced back to Pd$^0$ by the magnesium.\(^{132}\) This synthetic method was adopted in the efforts to reduce the triflate group of 43 (Scheme 16).

\[ \text{Scheme 16: Attempted reduction of the triflate group of 43. Reagents and conditions: i. Mg, Pd/C(10%), MeOH, r.t., Ar, 16 h; ii. PPh$_3$, Pd(OAc)$_2$, Et$_3$N, formic acid, DMF, 65°C, 1 h.} \]

Compound 43 in methanol was treated with palladium on charcoal and magnesium and stirred at room temperature overnight. The isolated product from this reaction was, however, the regenerated phenolic compound 42. This again suggested a nucleophilic attack at the sulfur atom as observed with the attempted iodination of 43 (Scheme 14), where the iodide ion attacked the sulfur atom to give 42. This problem was encountered by Mori \textit{et al.}\(^{132}\) in their investigations. It was reported that the use of excess reagents and the addition of ammonium acetate helped overcome this problem as well as accelerating the reaction.\(^{132}\) Ammonium acetate dissociates into acetic acid and ammonia \textit{in situ}. The acetic acid facilitates the dissolution of magnesium in methanol which in turn enhances the reduction of Pd$^{II}$ to Pd$^0$ by magnesium. Coordination of ammonia to the Pd$^0$ accelerates the single-electron transfer process to the aryl triflate.\(^{132}\) Adopting this method for 43, however, failed to give the desired product.

The use of triethylammonium formate as a reducing agent to cleave the C-O bond of aryl triflates has been reported by Peterson \textit{et al.}\(^{133}\) This method was shown to be efficient with aryl triflates with electron-withdrawing groups as well as with electron-donating groups.\(^{133}\) The hydrogen donor in this reaction is the formate. Triphenylphosphine reduces palladium(II) acetate \textit{in situ} to generate bis(triphenylphosphine)palladium(0). Insertion of palladium(0) between the aryl-triflate bond occurs through oxidative addition. Triflate is then displaced by formate ion followed by loss of carbon dioxide generating aryl-palladium(II) hydride. Reductive elimination results in the deoxygenated aryl product and regeneration of the catalytically active palladium species [(palladium(0)].\(^{134}\) Compound 43 was treated with triethylamine, formic acid, palladium(II) acetate and triphenylphosphine. Isolation and
purification of product again showed that the phenol 42 was regenerated. The idea of substituting the triflate of 42 with iodide in two steps was, therefore, abandoned.

3.2.5 Reduction of the nitro group of 4-(tert-butoxycarbonylamino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (43)

The purpose of having the iodine at position-1 of the key intermediate 67 is to exploit the reactivity of iodine towards a cyclisation reaction to form the five-membered pyrrolidine ring of the CBI drug. The question was, therefore, asked as to whether triflate can take up this role. If that was the case, then reduction of the nitro group of 43, followed by protection, will give an intermediate compound capable of undertaking the role of the desired key intermediate 67. Efforts to reduce the nitro group of 43 included hydrogenation with palladium on charcoal catalyst and the use of sodium dithionite as the reducing agent (Scheme 17). These, however, gave complex product mixtures which could not be separated. Reduction of the nitro group may have well occurred but the presence of the triflate group in such a close proximity to the exposed amine can lead to transfer of the triflate group to the amine giving a range of possible products. One way of avoiding the transfer of triflate to the amino group will be to carry out the reaction in acidic medium so as to trap the amino group as the protonated form and thereby reduce its nucleophilicity. This method runs the risk of causing the deprotection of the acid-labile Boc group. The use of tin(II) chloride to reduce the nitro group of 43 was tried but this led to a product mixture that included the loss of the Boc-group due to the acidic reaction conditions.

Scheme 17: Attempted reduction of the nitro group of 43. Reagents and conditions: Pd/C (10%), MeOH, H₂, 1.5 h.
Protection of the phenolic group of 42 before reduction of the nitro group followed by orthogonal protection of the formed amino group, was another idea investigated (Scheme 18). The protecting group of the phenol will then be removed and the exposed hydroxy group converted to a triflate group. This compound can then be investigated for cyclisation to form the pyrolidine ring of the proposed CBI drug after alkylation at the N²-position with appropriate alkylating group. Treatment of compound 42 with silylating agents, such as chlorotrimethylsilane and hexamethyldisilazane, in different reaction conditions, however, failed to give 48 but instead resulted in recovered starting material (Scheme 18).

The challenges faced resulted in another strategy being investigated. This involved reduction of the nitro group of 42 followed by selective protection of the amino group and then triflation of the phenolic group. Reducing agents such as catalytic hydrogenation and sodium dithionite were used in reducing 42 (Scheme 19). This resulted in the reduction of the nitro group but also oxidation of the product to give the quinone imine 50 as the E-isomer. This was confirmed by the observation of a correlation between the Boc-protons and the C3 proton of 50 on a NOESY spectrum. It was suspected that exposure of the reduced product to air was...
responsible for this oxidation. Reduction of the nitro group of 42 and protection of the intermediate amine in the absence of air was attempted. This involved reduction of 42 using sodium dithionite in a biphasic dichloromethane / water system under nitrogen. Once reduction was complete, the organic phase, which should contain the product, was syringed out and placed under nitrogen. Treatment of the mixture with trifluoroacetic anhydride under basic conditions should then give 51. This, however, resulted in the oxidised product 52. A literature search to ascertain the possibility of reducing 50/52 to regenerate the phenolic group was undertaken. Although no specific method was found for the reduction of a quinone imine, it was observed that quinones could be reduced to the hydroquinones using a range of reducing agents including sodium dithionite\textsuperscript{135, 136} and Raney nickel.\textsuperscript{137} However, since the reduction of 42 had been effected by sodium dithionite but still resulted in the oxidised product 50 and also the failure to synthesise 51 led to the thinking that, even if reduction of 50 or 52 were possible, this would revert back to its oxidised form on exposure to air and therefore this idea was abandoned.

3.2.8 Attempted reduction of the nitro group(s) of 1-iodo-2,4-dinitronaphthalene (54) and the synthesis of N,N’-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25)

Due to the challenges faced, efforts were made to introduce the iodine onto the naphthalene ring of 24 to give 54 before reduction of the nitro groups (Scheme 20). This will allow attempted selective reduction of the \textit{para}-nitro group with the aid of the bulky iodine shielding the \textit{ortho}-nitro group from reduction. Protection of the \textit{para}-amino group will be followed by reduction of the \textit{ortho}-nitro group using more vigorous reductive conditions. This will allow orthogonal protection of the \textit{ortho}-amino group to give the key intermediate 67. Alternatively, reduction of both nitro groups of 54 will still present the possibility of selectively protecting one of the amino groups followed by orthogonal protection of the other. Synthesis of 25 will be pursued if the above strategies fail. This will allow the exploration of selective deprotection / re-protection of 25 to access the orthogonally protected 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine key intermediate. Investigation into these possibilities was undertaken (Scheme 20).
3.2.8.1 Synthesis of 1-ido-2,4-dinitronaphthelene (54)

The synthesis of 54 was achieved in two steps, the first being triflation at oxygen to give 53 (Scheme 20). Nucleophilic aromatic substitution was then undertaken with iodide to give 54. Unlike the failed S_N_Ar reaction of compound 43 (Scheme 14), compound 53 has two activating nitro groups at the ortho- and para-positions to the triflate. The enhanced activation increases the electrophilicity of the C1 to nucleophilic attack rather than the sulfur atom of the triflate group. The reaction was studied in ethyl acetate and in acetone, with acetone giving a higher yield (74%) than in ethyl acetate (66%). This might be due to the greater solubility of sodium iodide in acetone.

3.2.8.2 Attempted reduction of the 4-nitro group of 1-ido-2,4-dinitronaphthelene (54)

Compound 54 was exposed to the same reaction conditions that allowed selective reduction of the 4-nitro group of 24 (Scheme 14). It was hoped that selective reduction of one of the nitro groups could be achieved. Efforts to reduce selectively the 4-nitro group of 54 using tin(II) chloride in acidic ethanol resulted in a mixture of products which included the de-iodinated
diamine 58 (Scheme 20). Prolonged reaction time was needed for progression of the reaction, probably due to poor solubility of 54, and the product mixture formed was difficult to separate. The inability to reduce selectively the 4-nitro group of 54 supports the role of the hydroxy group at the C1 position of 24 in the selective reduction of the nitro group (Scheme 14).

3.2.8.3 Reductive de-iodination
Reduction of both nitro groups without loss of iodine was also attempted. Various reagents were considered for the reduction of 54. This difficult reduction can also result in de-iodination. Hydrogenation in the presence of palladium-on-charcoal in a range of solvents (methanol, tetrahydrofuran, acetic acid) gave the de-iodinated diamine 58 (Scheme 20). It was hoped that the use of acetic acid as a solvent will make the mixture more acidic and reduce the possibility of dehalogenation which proceeds more effectively under basic conditions. This was, however, not the case as de-iodination still occurred. Sodium borohydride was used as a source of a fixed number of equivalents of hydrogen. Sodium borohydride degrades to generate hydrogen which gets adsorbed onto palladium on carbon to reduce the nitro groups. This is a form of hydrogenation but with the ability to control the amount of hydrogen present. The use of sodium borohydride (2 eq.), however, remarkably resulted in selective de-iodination to give 57 without reduction of the nitro groups. Platinum is said to be better at preserving halogens during hydrogenation combined with a fast rate of nitro group reduction. Platinum-on-carbon (5% and 1%) together with hydrogen or sodium borohydride were used but either resulted in de-iodination together with reduction of the nitro groups (5% Pt/C) or was unreactive (1% Pt/C).

3.2.8.4 The synthesis of N,N’-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4- diamine (25)
The difficulty encountered with efforts to reduce the nitro groups selectively meant that a new strategy was needed to circumvent these challenges. Synthesis of the key intermediate 67 without orthogonal protection of the amino groups was pursued (Scheme 20). Once synthesised, efforts will then be made to ascertain the possibility of selective deprotection / re-protection. Reduction of the nitro groups of 54 with concomitant de-iodination was carried out using tin(II) chloride. Protection of the amines with di-tert-butyl dicarbonate gave 59, which was readily isolated. Regioselective acid-catalysed electrophilic iodination of 59 with N-iodosuccinimide gave the aryl iodide 25 in a yield of 71%.79
3.2.9 Acidic de-iodination of N,N'-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25)

Selective removal of one of the Boc-protection groups was attempted by treating 25 with dilute trifluoroacetic acid (0.85% v/v) in dichloromethane at room temperature (Scheme 21).

An overall amount of 4 equivalent of the trifluoroacetic acid solution was added over 7 d. Isolation and purification of the product showed that de-iodination had occurred without deprotection to form 59 [experiment conducted by Wenyi Wang]. Efforts were then made to remove both Boc groups and then exploit the steric hindrance provided by the iodine to re-protect the 4-amino group selectively. Initial attempts to remove both Boc groups involved the use of trifluoroacetic acid at 0°C. This, however, gave the de-iodinated diamine product 58. Hydrogen chloride in dioxane (4.0 M) was then used with the view that the product formed after deprotection will precipitate as an hydrochloride salt and perhaps stop the de-iodination step. This product would then be quickly treated with di-tert-butyl dicarbonate to protect the 4-amino group selectively. This procedure resulted in a de-iodinated monoprotected product product 62 in a low yield (6%).

Assuming that deprotection with hydrogen chloride in dioxane had gone to completion, along with de-iodination, this observation suggested that selective protection of the N²-amine of 58

Scheme 21: Acidic de-iodination. Reagents and conditions: i. CF₃CO₂H (upto 4 equiv), CH₂Cl₂, r.t., 7 d; ii. CF₃CO₂H, 0°C, 1.5 h; iii. (a). HCl / dioxane (4 M), r.t. 45 min, (b). Boc₂O, Pr₂NEt, THF, N₂, r.t, 10 d.
was possible. It also meant that the N²-amine in absence of the iodine was more reactive since it is more sterically accessible. Protection of the N⁴-amine of 62 with a bulkier protecting group (e.g. benzyloxycarbonyl group), followed by electrophilic iodination at C1 will provide an intermediate with the potential of selective alkylation at N². This could then be used as the key intermediate in the synthesis of the proposed CBI. Having a smaller and more electronegative protecting group at N² and a bulkier and less electronegative group at N⁴ is, however, much more desirable.

3.2.10 Synthesis of the naphthalene key intermediate (67)

The observation of the ability to protect 1,3-naphthalenediamine 58 selectively gave a new direction to the synthesis of the key intermediate 67. This selective protection has also been achieved by the treatment of 58 with 2-(tert-butoxycarbonyloxyimino)-2-phenylacetonitrile to give 62 at a yield of 8%. The N²-amine of 58 will be protected by a smaller and more electronegative protecting group compared to the orthogonal protection at the N⁴-amine group. Having a smaller protecting group at the N²-amine will give greater accessibility to the alkylation agent and also with a more electronegative protecting group, the remaining proton at N² will be more acidic allowing easier deprotonation and selective alkylation. The chosen protecting group at N² was trifluoroacetyl and the orthogonal protection for the 4-amino group will be tert-butylcarbonyl.

Scheme 22: Synthesis of the key intermediate 67. Reagents and conditions: i. 10% Pd-C, H₂, THF, r.t., 16 h; ii. (CF₃CO)₂O, Pr₂NEt, dry THF, N₂, 0°C → 20°C, 16 h; iii. NIS, pTsOH.H₂O, dry THF, N₂, −78°C → 20°C, 20 h; iv. dilute (CF₃CO)₂O in dry THF (1.1% v/v), Pr₂NEt, dry THF, N₂, 0°C → 20°C, 16 h; v. aq. NaOH (5 M), THF, r.t., 105 min. vi. Boc₂O, dry THF, reflux, 16 h.

The synthesis of the key intermediate 67 began by reduction of commercially available 1,3-dinitronaphthalene 57 to the diamine 58, which was treated with one equivalent of trifluoroacetic anhydride in the presence of diisopropylethylamine at 0°C in dry tetrahydrofuran (Scheme 22). This unfortunately gave the di-protected compound 63 in 26%
yield and recovered starting material. Repeating the reaction in pyridine led to isolation of the same product 63 and unreacted starting material. Electrophilic iodination of 63 to form 64 will give a product that can be explored for selective deprotection in basic conditions with the hope of de-iodination not occurring. An attempt to undertake an electrophilic iodination of 63 to give 64, however, failed. The presence of the electron-withdrawing trifluoroacetamide protection rather than Boc protection as in 59 may be responsible for the lack of progress of this electrophilic iodination. The absence of a monoprotected product in the attempted selective protection of 58 using trifluoroacetic anhydride was an interesting observation. This was despite the use of one equivalent of anhydride. One would expect statistically that there should be at least some mono-protected compound(s). Trifluoroacetic anhydride is a very reactive electrophile and even weaker nucleophiles react with it. Ethyl trifluoroacetate was therefore used as a milder electrophile with the hope of promoting monoprotection.

Compound 58 in tetrahydrofuran was treated with ethyl trifluoroacetate in basic conditions. This reagent, however, proved very unreactive even when used in excess at room temperature. The use of trifluoroacetic anhydride was revisited. It was thought that part of the reason for exclusive di-protected product was due to adding the anhydride as a neat liquid which created a local high concentration leading to the di-protected compound 63. Compound 58 was therefore treated with dilute trifluoroacetic anhydride in tetrahydrofuran (~1.1% v/v), added dropwise over 2 h at 0°C. This interestingly led to isolation of the desired product 65 in a yield of 15% together with the di-protected compound 63 and recovered starting material 58. Several attempts were made to optimise this process including the use of different solvents (e.g. dimethylformamide, dichloromethane), different temperatures (e.g. −30°C, −70°C) and different concentrations of trifluoroacetic anhydride in tetrahydrofuran. These resulted in di- protection or gave a similar percentage yield of the mono-protected product. Temperatures lower than 0°C did not have a significant effect on the yield of the desired product and the use of DMF resulted in the di-protected product 64 only.

Despite the modest yield of 65, the di-protected compound could be deprotected with a nucleophilic base (e.g. NaOH, NH₃) and recycled to give the starting material 58. Deprotection of 63 to 58 was initially done using aqueous ammonia (35%) and methanol as the solvent. Solubility issues as well as the volatile nature of ammonia meant that this reaction took a long time to give the desired product, even after heating (50°C). Besides, one by-product of this reaction is trifluoroacetamide which necessitates purification of the product.
Due to these reasons, aq. sodium hydroxide was used to deprotect 63. This method results in trifluoroacetate ion as the by-product which is easily extracted into the aqueous layer during work-up. Protection of the N⁴-amine of 65 was achieved with the bulkier and less electronegative tert-butoxycarbonyl protecting group to give 66. Electrophilic iodination with N-iodosuccinimide gave 67, the key intermediate in the synthesis of the alkylating unit of the CBI drug.

3.2.11 NMR investigation into the de-iodination of iodonaphthalenediamines in acidic media

One of the major unexpected result in the synthesis of the key intermediate 67 was the de-iodination of 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine under acidic conditions. For instance, the use of dilute trifluoroacetic acid in dichloromethane (0.85% v/v, one equivalent) in an attempt to deprotect 25 regioselectively resulted in de-iodination without removal of the Boc groups (Scheme 21). The rationale for this experiment had been to remove only one of the Boc groups. Regardless of which Boc group was removed, an appropriate orthogonal protection could be carried out on the exposed amine to obtain a compound that could fulfil the role of the key intermediate 67. Furthermore, when the concentration of the acid (trifluoroacetic acid or hydrogen chloride) was increased in an attempt to cleave the Boc-protection groups of 25, this also resulted in de-iodination, in addition to loss of the Boc groups. These fascinating observations where de-iodination occurred in acidic media led to the design of a series of NMR studies to ascertain the cause of de-iodination and to elicit the mechanism of this process.¹⁴¹
3.2.11.1 Wheland-like intermediates in the de-iodination of N,N’-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25) in acidic media

Scheme 23: Reactions of 25 with CF$_3$CO$_2$H and with CF$_3$CO$_2$D in CDCl$_3$ showing Wheland-like intermediates. *Reagents:* i. CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ (3:1); ii. CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ (3:1); iii. aq. work-up.

Compound 25 was added to a mixture of CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ (3:1) at 0°C. Once dissolved, the solution was transferred into an NMR tube and placed into a pre-cooled (0°C) spectrometer probe. A series of NMR spectra was taken over time at 0°C and at 20°C (Figure 38).

Figure 38: Time-course of $^1$H NMR spectra of reaction of 25 with CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ (3:1).
The first major identifiable compound was the deprotected compound 68 with the iodine still intact (Scheme 23). This compound was fairly stable after 2 h at 0°C giving a yield of ~90% by NMR. The NMR showed the existence of a minor product in addition to 68 at this temperature. Raising the temperature of the spectrometer probe to 20°C resulted in the emergence of a new compound which was identified as the Wheland-like intermediate 69. This compound became the dominant product after 2 h at 20°C, giving a yield of ~> 90% with the remaining ~10% being compound 68. This suggested that an equilibrium existed between 68 and 69, favouring 69 at this temperature. A new peak corresponding to the proton at position-1 of 69 was observed at δ 6.51 in the proton NMR spectrum (Figure 38). This peak correlated by HSQC with a sp³ carbon peak at δ 9.76 in ¹³C NMR spectrum in contrast to the sp² ¹³C NMR peak of δ 101.74 corresponding to C1 of 68. The upfield shifts observed for 69 are due to:

- Loss of aromaticity by formation of the Wheland-like intermediate;
- The shielding effect of the iodine;
- The stabilisation of the positive charge.

There was a significant change in chemical shift of the proton at position-3 from δ 8.11 in 68 to δ 6.05 in 69 (Figure 38) and a corresponding change in ¹³C chemical shifts of δ 116.88 in 68 to δ 91.48 in 69. Compound 69 was quite stable in this solution at 20°C even after 7 d. However, all attempts to isolate 69 gave 58 through collapse of the Wheland intermediate with loss of an equivalent of I⁺. To enhance our understanding of this de-iodination process, the above experiment was repeated with 25 using CF₃CO₂D / CDCl₃. Again, the first compound formed was the deprotected product 70 followed by formation of the tetrahedral cationic species 71 on warming to 20°C (Scheme 23). Figure 39 shows a series of ¹H NMR spectra of a mixture of the two compounds.
Compound 70 was very stable at 0°C even after 4 h and showed no signs of incorporation of deuterium at this temperature. Once the mixture was warmed to 20°C, a mixture of the two compounds 70 and 71 could be identified in equilibrium by NMR. Both of these compounds underwent extensive incorporation of deuterium over time. At 15 min, there was no evidence of deuterium exchange at position-3 of 70, which was the dominant species at this stage. As time went on, the proton peak at δ 8.11, corresponding to the proton at position-3 of 70, reduced in intensity to 0.3 H (Figure 39). Thus at 3 h, this position had been 70% deuterated. The proportion of 70 in equilibrium to 71 also reduced from 10:1 at 15 min to 3:5 at 3 h.

Incorporation of deuterium also occurred at positions-1 and -3 of compound 71. Incorporation of deuterium at position-1 of 71 was 76% initially and increased over time to ~80% after 3 h at 20°C. The incorporation of deuterium observed at position-3 of 71, however, remained fairly constant at ~93% which reflects the overall ratio of exchangeable D to H in solution.

Attempts to isolate 71 gave 72 with multiple deuterium incorporation which was confirmed by mass spectrometry. The higher initial percentage of protium (24%) at position-1 of 71 compared to the overall ratio in solution suggest that the source of this new proton may have intra-molecular origin. If there were no intra-molecular contribution then the initial percentage deuteration should reflect the overall ratio of exchangeable D to H in solution. It follows then that, even though initial addition of deuterium to N² occurs rapidly, H to D exchange is quite slow, allowing intra-molecular transfer of proton from N² to position-1. This intra-molecular proton then undergoes deuterium exchange with solution.
3.2.11.2 Wheland-like intermediates from naphthalene-1,3-diamine in acidic media

In order to ascertain if the observed Wheland intermediates were due to the presence of iodine at position-1, compound 58 was subjected to the same reaction conditions as above at 20°C. Exposure of 58 to CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ gave 73 and 74 in an equilibrium ratio of 4:1 which stayed constant even after 7 d (Scheme 24). Of particular interest in 74 was the observation of a CH$_2$ peak at $\delta$ 4.13 in the proton NMR spectrum, which correlated with a peak at $\delta$ 33.28 in the $^{13}$C NMR spectrum. This was confirmed with a phase-sensitive HSQC and DEPT analysis (Figure 40).

Scheme 24: Reactions of 58 with CF$_3$CO$_2$H and with CF$_3$CO$_2$D in CDCl$_3$, showing Wieland-like intermediates. 
Reagents: i. CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ (3:1); ii. CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ (3:1); iii. aq. work-up.
This upfield chemical shift of the aromatic protons of 74 is in line with the observation made for 71. Exposure of 58 to CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ led to 75 and 76 in equilibrium ratio of ~5:1 (Scheme 24). Incorporation of deuterium occurred at position-1 and -3 of 75. Incorporation of deuterium into position-1 of 75 was slower than position-3 (Figure 41). No incorporation of deuterium was observed at position-1 up to 1 h at 20°C. Incorporation of deuterium was observed after 6 d at 72%. This was in contrast to deuterium exchange at position-3 of 75. Incorporation of deuterium into position-3 of 75 varied from 0% at 5 min to 49% at 40 min and finally 75% on day six (Figure 41).
The faster deuterium exchange at position-3 compared to position-1 is expected since the proton at position-3 is surrounded by the two amino electron-donating groups compared, to the position-1 proton which is adjacent to only one amino group. In regards to the observed Wheland intermediate 76, there was a general upfield chemical shift of the protons due to reasons discussed above. Separate peaks corresponding to CHD and CH₂ protons at position-1 of 76 were identified in the proton NMR spectrum at δ 4.11 and δ 4.13 owing to isotope shifts (Figure 42).

**Figure 41:** Time course ¹H NMR showing increasing deuteration at C1 and C3.
Initially, a singlet integrating for two protons was present at δ 4.13 in the $^1$H NMR spectrum. This corresponded to the CH$_2$ at position-1 of 76. Over time, this peak diminished with the appearance of another peak upfield at δ 4.11 corresponding to CHD. The initial observation of a CH$_2$ peak corresponding to protons at position-1 again highlights the role of intra-molecular transfer of hydrogen to this position from the adjacent amino group. If the source of proton were from the solution (inter-molecular), then one would expect some deuteration right from the start. It can therefore be said that intra-molecular transfer of protons from N$^2$ to position-1 occurs before H $\rightarrow$ D exchange. It was also noticed that the incorporation of deuterium at position-3 was faster than at position-1 and stayed constant (~80%) throughout the experiment. However, deuteration at position-1 of 76 ranged from 0% at 5 min to 95% on day six. Deuterium incorporation at position-1 and -3 of 76 was confirmed by $^{13}$C NMR which showed $^{13}$C-D coupling ($J = 20$ Hz for C1 and 24.5 Hz for C3).
To investigate the influence of a non-acid-labile electron-withdrawing group at N\(^2\), compound 67 was added to a mixture of CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)H / CDCl\(_3\) (3:1) at 0\(^\circ\)C for 2 h to give the Boc-deprotected 77. This after warming to 20\(^\circ\)C for 48 h gave the deiodianated compound 78 without observation of a Wheland-like intermediate. A transient Wheland-like intermediate might be involved but the equilibrium concentration in this case is too low for it to be observed. This compound was confirmed by the existence of an extra \(^1\)H peak at \(\delta\) 8.29 corresponding to the new proton at position-1 of 78.

The experiment was repeated with CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)D / CDCl\(_3\) to give 79 initially and then 80 on warming to 20\(^\circ\)C. Compound 79 did not show any significant incorporation of deuterium at position-3 at 0\(^\circ\)C, with this signal integrating to almost one proton in the spectra. Initial \(^1\)H NMR spectra after \~15 min of warming to 20\(^\circ\)C showed the presence of both 79 and 80. The spectra showed that a significant amount of deuterium (72\%) was incorporated at position-3 of 79. Significant incorporation of deuterium also occurred at position-1 (80\%) and position-3 (69\%) of 80 at 15 min. Keeping the reaction mixture at 20\(^\circ\)C for 48 h led to the complete conversion of 79 to 80. Increased incorporation of deuterium also occurred at position-1 (86\%) and position-3 (82\%) of 80. The N\(^2\)-amide proton of 79 and 80 was extensively exchanged with deuterium (95-100\%) owing to its acidic nature. In regards to the proposal of intra-molecular transfer of protium / deuterium from N\(^2\) to the position-1 carbon, the observation of a very high level of deuteration at position-1 of 80 after just 15 min of warming re-affirms this claim. With the N\(^2\)-amide proton extensively exchanged with deuterium, one will expect that if the intra-molecular theory was true then there should be a
higher deuterium at position-1 of 80 right from the beginning as observed. The faster incorporation of deuterium at position-1 (80%) than position-3 (69%) at 15 min is partly due to the enhanced acidic nature of the N\textsuperscript{2}-amide deuterium and the fact that intra-molecular deuterium exchange seems to favour the C1 position over the C3 position. Incorporation of deuterium was further confirmed by observation of \( ^{13} \text{C} \rightarrow \text{D} \) coupling in the \( ^{13} \text{C} \) NMR.

### 3.2.11.4 Incorporation of deuterium into 2-methyl propene

In each case where deprotection of Boc occurred (25 and 67), \( ^{13} \text{C} \) NMR spectroscopy showed that the tert-butyl group was trapped by the acid to give tert-butyl trifluoroacetate 81 (Figure 43).

![Figure 43: Mechanism of incorporation of deuterium in Bu\textsuperscript{t} trifluoroacetate and \( ^{13} \text{CNMR showing C \rightarrow D} \) coupling as a result of incorporation of deuterium into Bu\textsuperscript{t}.](image)

When CF\textsubscript{3}CO\textsubscript{2}D / CDCl\textsubscript{3} was used, it was observed that incorporation of deuterium into the tert-butyl groups occurred to give 82. Evidence of incorporation of multiple deuteriums was seen in the \( ^{13} \text{C} \) NMR spectrum (Figure 43). The intermediate tert-butyl cation formed during the deprotection of Boc undergoes β-elimination to form 2-methylpropene. The tert-butyl cation and the 2-methylpropene exist in equilibrium until trapped by a nucleophile. Nucleophilic attack of 2-methylpropene by trifluoroacetic acid leads to the first opportunity of deuterium incorporation into the formed tert-butyl trifluoroacetate 85 (Figure 43). The tert-
butyl protected trifluoroacetic acid 85 is subjected to further deprotection in the acidic media and and subsequent β-elimination giving further opportunities for deuterium incorporation. The end result is multiple deuterium incorporation which leads to multiple splitting in the $^{13}$C NMR corresponding to the tert-butyl primary carbons (Figure 43). Tert-butyl was therefore a potential source of inter-molecular protons contributing to the new proton observed in the Wheland intermediates.

3.2.11.5 Proposed mechanism for de-iodination of 1-iodonaphthalen-2,4-diamine (68) via Wheland intermediate

Scheme 26 shows the proposed mechanism for the de-iodination of 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine 68. Proton transfer from N² to C1 of 68, causes loss of aromaticity leading to the Wheland-like intermediate 69. The source of the new proton in the Wheland intermediate, has an intra-molecular origin. Nucleophilic abstraction of the iodine and restoration of aromaticity leads to the de-iodinated product 58. The nucleophile responsible for trapping the iodine as I⁺-equivalent is likely to be the trifluoroacetate ion. However, when the solutions were left for prolonged days (~7 d) the colour turned dark red, suggesting the presence of I₂. The loss of iodine is accelerated by the presence of electron-withdrawing group on the ring, such as trifluoroacetamido as in 77 → 78. Electron-withdrawing groups make the iodine more electrophilic pushing the reaction towards the de-iodinated product. This means the Wheland intermediate becomes less stable as seen in 77 → 78 (79 → 80) where this intermediate was not observed by NMR.

Electrophilic aromatic substitution proceeds via a π-complex, which eventually converts to a “σ-complex” also known as Wheland intermediate. Charge transfer UV/vis absorption of several π-complexes has been used in their identification as well as crystallography. The majority of these intermediates are transient and unstable due to their rapid deprotonation making it difficult to observe them by NMR. The Wheland intermediates tend to be observed only by femtosecond time-resolved laser absorption spectroscopy. Few compounds such as
1,3,5-trimethylbenzene and hexamethylbenzene reacts with \( \text{NO}_2^+\text{BF}_3^- \) at -70°C under super-acidic conditions to give Wheland intermediates that are observable by NMR. These intermediates are unstable at higher temperatures and therefore decompose on warming.\textsuperscript{144, 145} Wheland intermediates with carboranyl counter ions have also been isolated and observed by NMR.\textsuperscript{146-148} Furthermore, molecules with both Wheland-like cations and Meisenheimer-like anions have been isolated.\textsuperscript{149} Efforts to understand why de-iodination of Boc-protected naphthlenediamines occurs during the synthesis of the key intermediate 67 of the alkylating subunit of the proposed CBI drugs, have led to the observation of the first Wheland-like intermediates derived from amino-naphthalenes. These cations are very stable, even at room temperature and decompose on isolation. The Wheland intermediates are stabilised by delocalisation of the positive charge involving both nitrogens. In addition, the Wheland intermediate with iodine 71 is further stabilised by the transformation of the sp\(^2\) hybridised C1 to sp\(^3\) hybridised carbon which help to relieve the steric compression between the bulky iodine and the peri 8-H. These experiments have provided an insight into why de-iodination is a major challenge in the acidic deprotection of Boc-protected iodo-naphthalenediamines.

### 3.2.12 Sharpless epoxidation

With the synthesis of 67, the next step was to alkylate the N\(^2\) of 67 with an alkylating unit that could participate in a cyclisation step to form the pyrrolidine ring of the proposed CBI drug 3. The first of such groups to be introduced was an epoxide. Sharpless epoxidation\textsuperscript{150} was employed in the enantioselective synthesis of the epoxy alcohol 90 (Scheme 29). This method provides 2,3-epoxy alcohols with high enantioselectivity. Depending on the tartrate enantiomer used, selective synthesis of a particular enantiomer of the epoxy alcohol can be attained. When the alkene unit is in plane of drawing with the hydroxymethyl substituent at the lower right corner, as shown in Scheme 27, the delivery of the epoxide oxygen occurs either from the top (D-(−)-diethyl tartrate), or from underneath the plane (L-(+) -diethyl tartrate) regardless of the substituent pattern.\textsuperscript{150} This method allows the selective synthesis of highly enantiopuric epoxy alcohols.
For instance, epoxidation of \((E)\)-buten-2-ol with D-(-)-diethyl tartrate gives the 2\(R\),3\(R\) enantiomer, whilst the use of L-(+)-diethyl tartrate gives the 2\(S\),3\(S\) enantiomer.\textsuperscript{151} The 2\(R\),3\(R\) epoxy alcohol was selected since this configuration eventually leads to a CBI drug with a configuration (1\(S\),10\(R\)), which has been shown to have superior cytotoxicity.\textsuperscript{81} The use of the methylepoxy alcohol \textsuperscript{90} in the synthesis of the alkylation subunit of the proposed CBI drug will lead to the introduction of an extra stereogenic centre (10\(R\)), which is absent in the natural products. The extra methyl group is introduced in order to reduce the chance of direct alkylation by the seco-CBI of DNA, which would be detrimental to the design of prodrugs.\textsuperscript{125} Analogue incorporating the (+) (1\(S\),10\(R\)) diasteroisomer of the alkylation subunit has been found to be more active compared to the (−) (1\(R\),10\(S\)) diasteroisomer.\textsuperscript{81} It has also been observed that, when the two sterogenic centres are syn (1\(S\)/10\(S\) or 1\(R\)/10\(R\)) the seco-CBI drug possess a low toxicity and not suitable for development as a prodrug.\textsuperscript{124}

Alkylation of the N\textsuperscript{2} of \textsuperscript{67} with 2\(R\),3\(S\)-3-methyl-2-(4-nosyloxymethyl)oxirane will be followed by opening of the epoxide in a metal-mediated cyclisation. This is proposed to go via the lithium coordinated transition state \textsuperscript{88} (Scheme 28). Attack of the epoxide carbon occurs in an anti-fashion causing inversion of configuration at the stereogenic centre involved in the cyclisation to give (1\(S\),10\(R\))-\textsuperscript{5} (Scheme 28).\textsuperscript{81}
Commercially available buten-2-ol 89 (E/Z mixture 19:1), was added to a mixture of titanium tetraisopropoxide and D-(−)-diethyl tartrate, followed by tert-butyl hydroperoxide (TBHP) (Scheme 29). The titanium tetraisopropoxide and D-(−)-diethyl tartrate react together to form a catalyst complex which helps deliver the oxygen from TBHP to the double bond.

The original procedure for the Sharpless epoxidation, which included an alkaline hydrolysis step, is said to be difficult when the produced epoxy alcohol is water-soluble and/or volatile, as in 90. In such situations, very poor yields are observed since it is difficult to extract the epoxy alcohol into organic phases. A modified work-up without an alkaline hydrolysis step, designed for water-soluble epoxides, was used but this still led to majority of the product being lost, resulting in very low yields. Precipitation of excess reagents with Et₂O followed by filtration and chromatographic purification gave 90 in a yield of 50%. Compound 90 was then nosylated to give 91. Repeated recrystallisation to raise the enantiomeric purity gave the enantiopure 91 in an overall yield of 11% (68% ee in reference to literature value). The challenges met during the synthesis of 91 and the low yield attained led to the synthesis of 93 which could be easily accessed from the commercially available homochiral epoxy alcohol 92. In this way, 93 could be used to establish the feasibility of the chemistry in the synthesis.
of the pyrrolidine ring of the proposed CBI drug before committing the precious supply of 91. R-Glycidol 92 was nosylated under basic conditions to give 93 (>99% ee in reference to literature value). The importance of having the nosylate leaving group is that it makes the exocyclic CH₂ of the epoxide a more powerful electrophile than the CH₂ of the oxirane. In this way, attack of nucleophiles will take place exclusively at the exocyclic CH₂, with clean S_N2 displacement of the nosylate retaining the stereochemical configuration at the oxirane. With weaker leaving groups, such as chloride, initial attack of a nucleophile will be at the oxirane CH₂, opening the oxirane; the alkoxide formed will attack the exocyclic CH₂, leading to introduction of a CH₂-oxirane unit but with inversion of configuration. Intermediate-strength leaving groups, such as tosylate, proceed by both mechanisms, leading to loss of stereochemical integrity. Synthesising the nosylates of the epoxides also produces a solid that can be purified by repeated recrystallisation to raise the enantiopurity. Tietze et al. have reported that the chloride, mesylate, triflate and the nonaflate are difficult to purify compared to the nosylate.

3.2.13 Selective N²-alkylation of tert-butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (67)

![Scheme 30](image)

**Scheme 30:** Selective N²-alkylation of 67. *Reagents and conditions:* i. K₂CO₃, acetone, N₂, 50°C, 72 h.

One of the reasons for having orthogonal protections on the amino groups of 67 was to allow a selective alkylation to take place at N². The proton on the trifluoroacetamide group is more acidic, due to the electron-withdrawing trifluoroacetamide group, compared to the Boc protected N⁴-amine. Therefore, by careful selection of a suitable base, selective deprotonation of N² with subsequent alkylation with 93 can be achieved. In addition, the bulky nature of the Boc-group in comparison to the trifluoroacetamide protecting group should allow selective alkylation of the nitrogen of the trifluoroacetamide of 67. Selective N²-alkylation of 67 was investigated to give 95 (Scheme 30). The base used initially for deprotonation of the N² proton was potassium t-butoxide. Several attempts using this base in different reaction conditions (e.g. r.t., 50 → 70°C, 2 h → 72 h), however, did not give the desired product 95. Even the use of excess reagents did not give the product but instead the starting material was recovered in all cases. Monitoring by thin layer chromatography suggested that the epoxide
was being consumed in the reaction. There is therefore a possible chance of a nucleophilic attack by potassium t-butoxide on 93, consuming it and resulting in no alkylation of 67. This was despite a sequential addition of potassium t-butoxide to 67 before addition of the epoxide 93. The base was changed to potassium carbonate. The pKa of the conjugate acid of the carbonate anion lies between the pKa of NHCOCF$_3$ and NHBoc and therefore selective deprotection of the former is always likely to take place. Besides, the bulky nosylate group of 93 will aid in the selective N$^2$-alkylation. The low solubility of K$_2$CO$_3$ in acetone also means that a two-phase reaction takes place reducing the chance of nucleophilic attack of the oxirane nosylate by the carbonate anion. The reaction of 67 with 93 gave two compounds. The initial interpretation was that these could be due to regioselective alkylation. Mass spectrometry confirmed that these compounds were isomers and each contained only one oxiranyl methyl group. Furthermore, 2D NMR spectroscopy (HMBC, NOESY) confirmed that, in both compounds, the oxiranylmethyl group was located at the N$^2$-amide group and not the Boc-amide group. In the $^1$H NMR spectrum of one isomer, there was evidence of the existence of two rotameric forms about the F$_3$COC—N$^2$ amide bond in a ratio 1.3:1. This dispelled the idea that the two separated compounds could be rotamers about this bond. It was concluded that the two compounds were diastereoisomers of 95. The diastereoisomers 95a and 95b (Figure 44) were obtained in yields of 34% and 39%, respectively (i.e. 73% overall yield).

![Figure 44: Atropisomerism arising from restricted rotation about the N-aryl bond caused by the bulky iodine.](image)

Despite the existence of only one overt chiral centre in 95, the bulky iodine at position-1 restricts rotation around the C2—N$^2$ single bond giving two atropisomers. The naphthyl ring adopts an orientation perpendicular to the plane of the trifluoroacetamide creating a virtual chiral centre at the middle of the N-aryl bond (Figure 44).$^{81, 155}$ The atropisomers did not interconvert, meaning there existed two separable diastereoisomers both containing the same configuration at the oxirane. Unfortunately, it was not possible to identify the configurations at the virtual chiral centres of the two diastereoisomers. Observation of such atropisomerism in related compounds has been made by Tietze et al.$^{155}$ where they showed that removal of the iodine resulted in a single isomer and also cyclising the two atropisomers resulted in a single product with same configuration. Selective alkylation of the N$^2$-amide was therefore achieved
in good yield despite the use of excess potassium carbonate (4 eq.) which was needed for completion of reaction.

3.2.14 Metal-mediated cyclisation

\[\text{Scheme 31: Attempted metal mediated cyclisation. Reagents and conditions: i. MeLi, CuCN, dry THF, } -78^\circ\text{C} \rightarrow 25^\circ\text{C}, 72\text{ h; ii. ZnCl}_2, \text{Bu'Li, 3-bromopropene, N}_2, \text{-78}^\circ\text{C} \rightarrow 40^\circ\text{C}, 72\text{ h; iii. ZnCl}_2, \text{Bu'Li, N}_2, \text{-78}^\circ\text{C} \rightarrow 40^\circ\text{C}, 72\text{ h.}}\]

The next step was to undertake a metal-mediated cyclisation of 95a and 95b to give 96 (Scheme 31). A study by Tietze et al.\(^{81}\) showed that higher-order cuprate Li\(_2\)Cu(CN)Me\(_2\) and the zinc organyl Li\(_2\)Zn(SCN)Me\(_3\) were the best reagents for metallation in a similar cyclisation reaction. Lithium reagents were chosen due to the ability of lithium to coordinate with the oxygen of the epoxide to form a sterically fixed transition state \(^{88}\) (Scheme 28). There are two possible sites of attack on the epoxide to form either 5-exo-trig 96 and/or the 6-endo-trig products 100 (Scheme 32). However, Tietze et al. observed that in their cyclisation reactions, only the 5-exo-trig products were formed.\(^{81}\) Formation of the 6-endo-product is not detrimental, since substituting the hydroxy group with a better leaving group followed by Boc-deprotection will trigger spirocyclisation to generate the essential pyrrolidine ring and the electrophilic cyclopropane ring 102 (Scheme 32).\(^{41,156}\)
Li$_2$Cu(CN)Me$_2$ was prepared in situ by addition of MeLi to CuCN. This was treated with compound 95a or 95b with the aim of replacing the iodine with copper and allowing the aryl-copper to attack the oxirane to give 96. However, the sole product was 97, the result of loss of the trifluoroacetyl group (Scheme 31). This was attributed to the highly nucleophilic cyanide / methyl ion. The NMR of 97 showed the existence of conformers. This is likely to be due to slow rotation around the carbamate N-C(O) bond and the N$_2$-epoxide bond. The use of dilithium tetra-tert-butylzincate (Bu'$_4$ZnLi$_2$) was investigated. First of all, this reagent was tested for its ability to substitute an iodine on 4-iodophenol 98 with a propenyl group (Scheme 31). Dilithium tetra-tert-butylzincate was prepared in situ by adding tert-butyllithium to zinc chloride. 4-Iodophenol 98 was then added to allow iodine → zinc exchange followed by addition of 3-bromopropene. The first attempt using 1.1 equivalent of dilithium tetra-tert-butylzincate resulted in recovered starting material as the acidic phenolic proton was deprotonated rather than the desired halogen → zinc exchange. The procedure was repeated with two equivalents of dilithium tetra-tert-butylzincate to compensate for the presence of the acidic phenolic proton of 98. This modification led to the synthesis of 99 and suggested that this method could work with 95.\textsuperscript{157} Compound 95a and 95b were exposed to the same conditions with excess dilithium tetra-tert-butylzincate to compensate for the acidic Boc-carbamate proton. This, however, resulted in a complex product mixture that could not be separated. It is possible that removal of the N-H of 95a / 95b results in an unstable product leading to decomposition of the compound. It has also been reported that the electron-rich naphthalene ring tend to slow down metal-halogen exchange even in the case of naphthyl iodide and thus proton abstraction from the Boc-amide is favoured.\textsuperscript{41}

Scheme 32: Possible 5-exo-trig and 6-endo-trig cyclisation products and spirocyclisation of the endo-product to generate the pyrrolidine ring and the electrophilic cyclopropane ring.
3.2.15 Free-radical cyclisation

A new approach to the synthesis of the pyrrolidine ring of the alkylating subunit of the proposed CBI drug was needed. The route of trying to synthesis an enantiopure CBI drug had to be suspended. A racemic synthesis of the pyrrolidine ring was pursued. This involved selective alkylation of the N²-amide with 3-bromopropene followed by free-radical cyclisation.

An initial attempt to synthesise 104 using similar conditions as used in the synthesis of 95 (four equivalents of potassium carbonate, allyl bromide) gave the di-alkylated product 103. This suggests that steric hindrance between the Boc group of 67 and the bulky nosylated epoxide 93 contributed to the selective synthesis of 95 (Scheme 30). Compared to 94, 3-bromopropene is small enough to gain access to the Boc-amide nitrogen as well as the N²-amide nitrogen. The NMR of 103 showed the presence of two diastereoisomers, probably due to the slow rotation about the C-NBoc and C-NCOF₃ bond (Figure 45).

Scheme 33: Free radical cyclisation with TEMPO trap. Reagents and conditions: i. K₂CO₃, 3-bromopropene, acetone, N₂, 50°C, 16 h; ii. KOBuᵗ, 3-bromopropene, THF, N₂, 20°C → 50°C, 16 h; iii. TEMPO, Bu₃SnH, 60°C, 135 min; iv. aq. NaOH (5.0 M), THF, r.t., 105 min.
The slow rotation about the C-NBoc and C-NCO CF₃ is due to the bulkiness of the groups on N² and N⁴ as well as a possible steric clash with the bulky iodine and the peri-5 hydrogen during rotation around the C—N bond. This means that the allyl groups can either be on the same side or the opposite side of the naphthalene ring, resulting in the observed diastereoisomers. Potassium tert-butoxide (one equivalent) was used to remove selectively the N²-amide proton of 67, followed by allylation to give 104. The N²-allyl compound 104 was treated with tri-butyltinhydride (Bu₃SnH) and 2,2,6,6-tetramethyl-piperidine-1-oxyl (TEMPO), which promoted a 5-exo-trig free radical cyclisation with in situ TEMPO trap of the intermediate cyclisation product radical to give racemic 105. The TEMPO radical also acts as the free radical initiator to generate tri-butyltin radical. Abstraction of iodine by the tri-butyltin radical generates an aryl radical which then attacks the allyl double bond to generate the free radical cyclisation product. Entrapment by TEMPO generates the final product 105. This reaction does not go to completion unless excess reagents are used. This is likely to be due to the competing reaction between TEMPO and the generated tri-butyltin radical. This is especially true since the rate constant (k = ~8 × 10⁸ M⁻¹s⁻¹ at 80°C) of tri-butyltin radical abstracting the iodine is similar to the rate constant (k = 7.6 × 10⁸ M⁻¹s⁻¹ at 25°C) for reaction between the TEMPO and tri-butyltin radical. Aryl bromides have been shown to give lower conversions to product compared to the aryl iodides highlighting the essential role of having the iodide in the key intermediate 67. The 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine also conveniently acts as a protecting group for the next step of acylation at N². Selective base-catalysed hydrolysis of the trifluoroacetamide group of 105 with sodium hydroxide gave 106, ready to be coupled to the non-alkylating subunit.
3.3 Synthesis of the non-alkylating subunit of proposed CBI drug.

The non-alkylating subunit of the ant-tumour antibiotics is essential for their biological activity. The initial non-covalent binding of the anti-tumour antibiotics to double-stranded DNA is mediated by the non-alkylating subunit. The extent of binding by this subunit determines the potency and toxic effects of these agents. For instance, the ability of CC-1065 to cause delayed death and also its high potency have been attributed to its non-alkylating subunit.\textsuperscript{49, 75} The non-alkylating subunit chosen for the proposed CBI drug was 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carboxylic acid (DMAI). This subunit is devoid of the delayed death effect of CC-1065 which has been attributed to the presence of the two ethylene moieties and the terminal amide moiety present in the non-alkylating subunit.\textsuperscript{45, 49} It is also simpler to synthesise and its ability to form salts enhances aqueous solubility of the synthesised compound.\textsuperscript{80, 81} Total synthesis of this subunit was undertaken by adopting a Fisher-like indole synthesis.

3.3.1 Fisher-like indole synthesis

The Fisher synthesis of indoles involves the condensation of an arylhydrazine with a ketone, whilst an aryldiazonium salt replaces the arylhydrazine in the modified Fisher-like indole synthesis. Furthermore, the nucleophile in this Fisher-like indole synthesis is the enol tautomer of the ketone whilst in Fisher indole synthesis the nucleophile is the arylhydrazine. Compound 110 was prepared by Fisher-like indole synthesis from the substituted aniline 109 (Scheme 34).

\textbf{Scheme 34:} Synthesis of ethyl 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylate 110. Reagents and conditions: i. (a). KOH, EtOH, r.t. (b). Me\textsubscript{2}NCH\textsubscript{2}CH\textsubscript{2}Cl, toluene, reflux, 17 h; ii. SnCl\textsubscript{2}, HCl, 0°C → r.t., 19 h; iii. NaNO\textsubscript{2}/HCl, -20°C then ethyl 2-methyl-3-oxobutanoate/NaOAc, 20°C, 16 h, then HCl/EtOH/reflux, 30 min.

A Williamson ether synthesis was used to generate the nitrophenyl ether 108. The highly acidic phenolic proton of 4-nitrophenol 107 was removed by potassium hydroxide. This base will also liberate 2-chloro-N,N-dimethylethylamine from its hydrochloride salt; this amine has a mustard structure and will be in equilibrium with the 1,1-dimethylaziridinium ion. This
powerful electrophile reacts readily with the phenoxide to give 108. Reduction of the nitro group of 108 using tin(II) chloride in acid medium gave the aniline 109 at a yield of 88%. Compound 109 was diazotised with sodium nitrite in the presence of an acid catalyst. The acid initially reacts with the sodium nitrite to give the reactive nitroso species (NO\(^+\)). This then attacks the lone pair on the primary amine of 109, followed by dehydration to yield the diazonium salt. Scheme 35 shows the proposed mechanism for the formation of the indole ring of 110.

![Scheme 35: Proposed mechanism of the synthesis of 110 via a diazonium intermediate rather than the usual hydrazine intermediate of Fisher indole synthesis.](image)

Treatment of the diazonium salt 113 with ethyl 2-methyl-3-oxobutanoate 112 in the presence of the weak base sodium acetate gives a hydrazone 116. The aryldiazohydrazone tautomerises to the enamine 117 which then undergoes [3,3]-sigmatropic rearrangement and re-aromatisation of the benzene ring to give an aminal 120. Acid-catalysed decomposition of the aminal with the release of ammonia allows the loss of a proton and the formation of the aromatic indole...
110 at the modest yield of 15%. This synthesis of the indole 110 proved very challenging. The initial conditions for this reaction were diazotisation at 0°C, followed by treatment with ethyl 2-methyl-3-oxobutanoate for 1 h. This, however, did not give the desired product, even after increasing reaction time to 2 h. Finally, diazotisation was carried out at −20°C, which provided the desired product but at a low yield. Attempted optimisation by using excess reagents (NaNO₂ / HCl) or using a stronger acid (H₂SO₄) at the diazotisation step did not have any significant effect on the yield. As part of the work-up, the product had to be extracted with hot hexane in the presence of decolourising charcoal. Adsorption on the charcoal is one of the ways by which aromatic products may be lost. Furthermore, the last step of the synthesis involved heating the mixture with ethanolic HCl. The presence of water in this step will inevitably lead to hydrolysis of the ethyl ester group to produce the indole acid. This will then be easily lost in the water layer during basic work-up. The challenges faced with the Fisher-like synthesis meant that a different approach was needed in the efficient synthesis of 110.

3.3.2 Synthesis of 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carboxylic acid (DMAI) (127)

Scheme 36: Synthesis of DMAI. Reagents and conditions: i. sat. Ethanolic HCl, N₂, reflux, 1 h; ii. (a) SOCl₂, EtOH, 80°C, 1 h; (b) sat. ethanolic HCl, reflux, 4-16 h; iii. 2-chloro-N,N-dimethylamine hydrochloride, K₂CO₃, CHCl₃, H₂O, 65 → 81°C, 16 h; iv. CsCO₃, MeOH/H₂O (2:1), reflux, 2 h.

When the indole-2-carboxylic acid 124 became commercially available, a new and shorter approach to the synthesis of 110 was adopted (Scheme 36). This involved esterification of 124, followed by Williamson ether synthesis to alkylate the phenolic hydroxyl group to introduce the O-(2-dimethylamino)ethyl unit. Hydrolysis of the ester should then give the
desired indole carboxylic acid 127 to couple to 106. Esterification of the carboxylic group of 124 was initially attempted using *para*-toluenesulfonic acid to activate the carboxylic group to nuleophilic attack by ethanol. Analysis of the crude products formed suggested the presence of some desired product 125, starting material 124 and a possible dimer of 124. Compound 124 in ethanol was treated with thionyl chloride under reflux conditions. Thionyl chloride reacts with ethanol to generate hydrochloric acid which then catalyses the esterification. This procedure, however, resulted in a poor yield of 125 (3%) and a range of side products. The use of ethanolic-hydrogen chloride for the esterification was investigated by boiling 2-(indol-3-yl)acetic acid 122 in saturated ethanolic hydrogen chloride to give 123 at 82% yield. Extension of this procedure to compound 124 gave 125 at a yield of 92%. In one instance of the synthesis of 125 using ethanolic-hydrochloric acid, the reaction was allowed to run overnight (16 h). This resulted in the formation of the side product 126 (~10%) as well as the desired product 125 (Scheme 36). Ethanol is protonated by hydrochloric acid to form an electrophilic ethyloxonium ion. Nucleophilic attack at this ion by the phenolic hydroxy group gives 126 with the loss of water. Compound 125 was then alkylated with 2-chloro-N,N-dimethylethylamine to give 110 in 80% yield. Basic ester hydrolysis of 110 gave the required indole acid 127 for coupling to the alkylating subunit 106.
3.4 Coupling of the alkylating and non-alkylating subunits

With the synthesis of the alkylating subunit 106 and the DMAI subunit 127 of the proposed CBI drug having been achieved, the next step in the synthetic process was to couple the two together. Initial efforts to synthesise 128 via the acid chloride of 127 failed, resulting with recovery of starting material, despite the use of 4-dimethylaminopyridine as a catalyst (Scheme 37). The use of the coupling agent, N-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-N’-ethylcarbodiimide hydrochloride (EDC.HCl) was tried but this attempt also failed even after extending the reaction time. The preactivation of carbodiimide coupling agents relies on protonation of the carbodiimide by the carboxylic acid.\textsuperscript{158} The unhindered basic amino group present in 106 is likely to interfere with this preactivation step by being preferentially protonated. Thus initial preactivation before addition of 106 is desirable. Carpino \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{158} have also observed that the neutral diisopropylcarbodiimide (DIC) is more effective compared to other carbodiimide coupling agents with protonated / quartenised tertiary amino groups (\textit{e.g.} EDC.HCl). Coupling using diisopropylcarbodiimide and 1-hydroxybenzotriazole to preactivate 127 before addition of 106 was therefore investigated. The indolecarboxylic acid 127 was pre-treated with diisopropylcarbodiimide and 1-hydroxybenzotriazole to allow formation of the active benzotriazolyl ester. Compound 106 was then coupled to the

\textbf{Scheme 37}: Coupling of the alkylating subunit 106 and the DMAI subunit 127. \textit{Reagents and conditions}: i. N,N-diisopropylcarbodiimide, HOBt, DMF, N\textsubscript{2}, 0°C → 40°C, 18 h.
benzotriazolyl ester to give 128 at a satisfactory yield of 64%. Despite the precautions taken by sequential addition of compounds / reagents, mass spectrometry suggested that a small amount of the alkylating subunit 106 had reacted with the carbodiimide to give the guanidine 129 \[\text{MS (ES}^+\text{) m/z 580.4250 (M + 1) (C}_{34}\text{H}_{34}\text{N}_{5}\text{O}_{3}\text{ requires 580.4227)}.\]

3.5 Reductive removal of the 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine protecting group

The next step in the synthesis of the proposed CBI drug was to remove the masking 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidinyl group by reductive cleavage of the N-O bond. This involved the use of zinc dust as the reducing agent in acidic conditions. Several attempts in tetrahydrofuran / acetic acid / water or ammonium chloride / methanol with excess zinc dust did not result in significant reaction. Activation of the zinc by stirring in aqueous hydrogen chloride (10%) was therefore undertaken; the activated dust was added to 128 in a solvent mixture of tetrahydrofuran / acetic acid / water at a ratio of 1:3:1. This procedure led to the complete reductive removal of the tetramethylpiperidinyl group. However, side products 130, 131 and 132 as well as the desired product 133 were formed (Scheme 38). The side products could be
converted back to the desired product by either protecting the amino group and/or hydrolysing the acetyl group. The use of a high proportion of acetic acid and the sequence of addition of reagents was thought to be responsible for the problems encountered. The Boc group is acid-labile and thus may be prone to destruction by acetic acid. The acetylation of the hydroxy group is facilitated by Zn$^{2+}$ ions formed, which act as Lewis acids catalysing the esterification. As a result of these problems, the reaction was repeated with smaller proportion of acetic acid (i.e. tetrahydrofuran / acetic acid / water 3:1:1) and sequential addition of reagents with acetic acid being the last to be added. This gave 133 at a yield of 71% without side products.

3.6 Activation of the proposed seco-CBI drug

![Scheme 39: Activation of seco-CBI drug. Reagents and conditions: i. MsCl, Et$_3$N, DMF, N$_2$, 0°C, 1 h then LiCl, 20°C, 3 d; ii. MsCl, pyridine, N$_2$, 0°C, 1 h then LiCl, 20°C, 7 d; iii. HCl in dioxane (4.0 M), 20°C, 2 h.]

Substitution of the pendant hydroxy group of 133 with a better leaving group is required to aid Winstein cyclisation of the seco-drug to form the reactive cyclopropane ring needed for potency. Substitution of the hydroxy group of 133 with chlorine to form 135 was initially
attempted under Appel reaction conditions\textsuperscript{81} using triphenylphosphine and tetrachloromethane in dry dimethylformamide (Scheme 39). Scheme 40 shows the proposed reaction mechanism.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Scheme 40:} Proposed mechanism of attempted Appel reaction.
\end{center}

The source of the chlorine in the Appel reaction is the tetrachloromethane. Triphenylphosphine 137 initially reacts with tetrachloromethane 138 forming the intermediate phosphonium salt 139 and trichloromethane anion 140. The trichloromethane anion deprotonates the hydroxy group of 133, yielding the alkoxide 141 and forming chloroform as the side product. Nucleophilic attack of the phosphonium salt 139 by the alkoxide 141 gives the oxyphosphonium intermediate 142. The oxygen is converted into a leaving group followed by S\textsubscript{N}2 displacement by the \textit{in situ} generated chloride ion to form the desired product 135. The reaction also releases triphenylphosphine oxide as a co-product. This reaction was, however, unsuccessful with 133 (Scheme 39). Mass spectrometry showed the presence of triphenylphosphine oxide and suggested that there was another source of oxygen reacting with the reagent. This led to pre-drying the solvent with molecular sieves to remove any trace of water and carrying the reaction under N\textsubscript{2} atmosphere. A large excess of triphenylphosphine was also used with the aim of compensating for any additional source of oxygen present. However, the reaction did not proceed even after raising the temperature. The limited solubility of compound 133 in organic solvents meant that this method of chlorination could not be pursued with other solvents.
Thionyl chloride was then investigated as a method to convert the –CH₂OH into –CH₂Cl. The use of this acidic reagent meant that steps had to be taken to protect the Boc group of 133. Compound 133 in dry dimethylformamide was treated with triethylamine and thionyl chloride. The basic triethylamine should serve to shield the Boc group from acidic deprotection. This method also failed to yield 135 giving rise to a complex product mixture in which the components could not be identified.

The next trial was to treat 133 with methanesulfonyl chloride in the presence of triethylamine. The idea was that, once the alkyl mesylate had formed, the chloride ions from the triethylammonium salt will then displace the mesylate group to yield 135. Monitoring by mass spectrometry showed that the mesylation step was successful whilst the substitution with chloride failed. Tetra-butyl ammonium chloride was then added to the mixture to increase the concentration of chloride ions. This, however, also failed to yield the chloro product 135. The reaction was repeated and lithium chloride was used as the source of excess chloride ions. Purification and characterisation of the product formed, however, surprisingly showed that, in addition to the desired formation of the –CH₂Cl group, the Boc-protection had been lost and the exocyclic nitrogen had condensed with a derivative of N,N-dimethylformamide to give the dimethylformamidine 134. Scheme 41 shows a proposed mechanism for this observation.
Dimethylformamide reacts with the excess mesyl chloride to give the imidate anhydride 144. Nucleophilic attack at 144 by the Boc-amine anion 145 gives the intermediate 146. Loss of methanesulfonate gives 147. The Boc-protecting group is then lost to give the dimethylformimidamide 134, driven by quench of the iminium cation. The reaction was repeated with pyridine as the solvent. Mesylation followed by substitution of the mesylate with chlorine afforded 135 at a good yield of 66%. Treatment of 135 with hydrogen chloride in dioxane removed the Boc-protecting group to give the final seco-CBI drug as the dihydrochloride salt 136. Biological evaluations were undertaken on 136 to assess its DNA-binding ability and its cytotoxicity.
3.7 Calf-thymus DNA melting assay

The temperature at which double stranded DNA unwinds and unzips (denatures) is a useful tool to assess the binding of drugs to DNA. DNA absorbs light in the UV region due to the presence of the aromatic bases adenine, thymine, guanine and cytosine. Stacking interactions, hydrogen bonding and hydrophobic effects between the bases are responsible for the helical and compact nature of DNA. The compact nature of duplex DNA limits the resonance of the aromatic rings in the UV region and thus the DNA absorbs at a lower intensity. As denaturation of DNA occurs (e.g. by heating), the duplex structure unwinds and unzips to form single-stranded DNA (Scheme 42).

![Scheme 42: The melting of double stranded DNA by increasing temperature.](image)

The bases become unstacked in the process, as hydrogen bonds are broken allowing higher intensity of absorbance. When denaturation of DNA is effected by increase in temperature, this is also referred to as melting. The temperature at which the absorbance is 50% of the maximum is referred to as the transition-melting temperature ($T_m$). At this temperature, 50% of the DNA is denatured. Modification of the DNA structure by binding to molecules causes a change in the $T_m$ value. For instance, agents that bind to and stabilise the DNA double helix (e.g. doxorubicin) increase the $T_m$, whilst agents that destabilise DNA (e.g. benzoacronycine derivatives) reduces the $T_m$. The extent of increase / decrease of $T_m$ is correlated to the strength of interaction between the agent and DNA.

Melting temperature measurements using calf-thymus DNA were undertaken to investigate the effect of the proposed CBI drug 136 on dsDNA. Calf-thymus DNA was treated with a
range of concentrations of 136 and allowed to incubate for 1 h. The amount of drug needed per molar equivalent to dsDNA (9.06 × 10^5 M) was calculated using the equation below:

\[
Volume \ of \ sample = Molar \ concentration \ of \ diluted \ DNA \times Volume \ of \ diluted \ DNA \times MW \ of \ drug \ sample \times Molar \ equivalent \ required \ (0.01 \rightarrow 0.6)
\]

The mixtures were slowly heated up to 95°C to denature the DNA with continuous monitoring of UV absorption at 256 nm. An initial investigation to determine the appropriate time of incubation of the drug with DNA involved incubating 136 at 0.1 molar equivalents (MEq) for 1 h and 24 h with calf-thymus DNA. The results obtained showed that there was no significant difference between the data at the two incubation times and that binding to DNA and subsequent alkylation by 136 was a relatively fast process. This highlights the rapid nature of the Winstein cyclisation of 136 at near neutral pH to form the highly reactive cyclopropane ring leading to subsequent alkylation. Based on this result, subsequent tests were carried out with a 1 h incubation time. Figure 46 shows a graph for the normalised absorbance against temperature for the different concentrations of 136.

![Figure 46: Normalised melting curve for 136 at different molar equivalents (MEq).](image)

The normalised absorbance is calculated by subtracting the control absorbance (Buffer + DMSO + dsDNA) from the test absorbance (buffer + DMSO + dsDNA + 136). Plotting this against temperature gives a sigmoid curve. The rightward shift of the sigmoid curve on increasing the concentration of 136 shows an increasing \( T_m \). This confirms that 136 binds to
double-stranded DNA and that the effect of this binding is to stabilise the dsDNA. Destabilising agents should cause a reduction in $T_m$ upon increasing the concentration. As the temperature is increased, the absorbance initially rises very slowly. At this point, the majority of the DNA is in the duplex form, tightly held together by hydrogen bonds. At a characteristic temperature, there is a sudden rise in absorbance. This reflects the melting of dsDNA into single strands. As all the dsDNA are melted, the absorbance becomes constant causing the curve to plateau. At this point, the bases constituting DNA are fully unstacked and at maximum resonance and thus have maximum UV absorbance. The mid-point of the sigmoid curve is the $T_m$ but this is best visualised by plotting the first derivative curves of the normalised absorbance curves (Figure 47).

![Figure 47: First derivative melting curve for 136 at varying molar equivalents (MEq).](image)

The first derivative of the melting curves (Figure 47) is obtained by plotting the change in absorbance / change in temperature against temperature. This gives a bell-shaped curve, the peak (midpoint) of it being the $T_m$ for the particular concentration of drug. There is a general increase (rightward shift) of the peak of the curves which corresponds to an increase in $T_m$ with concentration. The measured melting temperature of calf-thymus DNA in absence of 136 (control) was 68.4°C. The effect of increased concentration of 136 on the change in melting temperature is shown in Figure 48.
As the concentration of 136 increases per given concentration of DNA (9.06 × 10⁻⁵ M), there is a rise in melting temperature until saturation of the DNA binding sites occurs. The results above from the DNA-binding assay show that the proposed CBI drug is capable of binding to DNA. The effect of the drug is brought about by its ability to stabilise the double-stranded DNA. This should interfere with cellular processes such as transcription and translation of DNA, leading to cell death. ∆Tₘ can be used to assess how strongly an agent binds to DNA. For instance CC-1065 has been predicted to have a maximum ∆Tₘ value of >31.5 deg. C at a DNA : drug ratio of 6.9 (0.14 MEq). This high ∆Tₘ suggests that CC-1065 binds very strongly to DNA. This is in agreement with the observation that CC-1065 binds irreversibly with DNA under aqueous physiological conditions. This irreversible DNA binding has been linked to the high cytotoxicity caused by CC-1065 and also its ability to cause delayed death. The maximum near-saturation ∆Tₘ observed for the proposed CBI drug 136 is approximately 13.0 deg. C at a DNA : drug ratio of 1.6 (0.6 MEq) which is similar to the clinically used cytotoxic agent, doxorubicin (∆Tₘ = 18 deg. C). The unnatural enantiomers of the anti-tumour antibiotics have been shown to possess a lower DNA alkylation efficiency compared to the natural enantiomers. For instance (−)-duocarmycin SA alkylates DNA at a concentration ten times lower than that required by (+)-duocarmycin SA. The significant elevation of the Tₘ of calf-thymus DNA by 136 despite being the racemate suggests that this compound is highly efficient at DNA alkylation.

Figure 48: Tₘ shift against molar equivalent (MEq) of proposed CBI drug 136.
3.8 Cell viability assay

In order to test the cytotoxicity of the synthesised drug 136, an MTS assay was carried out. This is a chromogenic assay to test cell viability. Mitochondrial reductase enzymes in viable cells are able to convert the MTS tetrazolium reagent into the coloured aqueous soluble formazan product (Scheme 43).\textsuperscript{162}

![Scheme 43: Structures of MTS tetrazolium and its formazan product.]

The amount of formazan produced (colour intensity) is proportional to the number of viable cells and can be measured at 490 nm.\textsuperscript{162,163} This assay requires fewer steps compared to its precursor, the MTT (3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-diphenyltetrazolium bromide) assay. The MTT assay produces a crystalline formazan dye which needs an extra step to dissolve before recording of the absorbance at 590 nm.\textsuperscript{164} Cytotoxic agents cause reduction in the number of viable cells and therefore a diminution in formazan levels. This effect should be proportional to the concentration of the cytotoxic agent.

The inhibitory effect of 136 on prostate cancer cell lines was investigated using LNCaP cells. LNCaP cells are a PSA-producing human prostate cancer cell line which is also androgen sensitive.\textsuperscript{165} A range of concentrations of 136 (1 nM → 1 µM) was added to LNCaP cells in a 96-well plate. Incubation at 37°C in a humidified atmosphere containing 5% CO\textsubscript{2} (v/v) was carried out for 3 d. The number of viable cells was quantified using the MTS reagent and measuring the absorbance of the produced formazan at 490 nm. In reference to the control cell number, the results were expressed as percentage inhibition against the concentration of 136 (Figure 49).
The inhibitory effect of the racemate of 136 on LNCaP cells was observed even at a very low concentration (1 nM). Approximately 60% inhibition occurred at 20 nM of drug concentration. The preliminary IC$_{50}$ for this compound as a racemate was 18.0 nM highlighting the extreme potency of 136. This correlates well with the ability of 136 to alkylate DNA and inhibit cellular processes. The natural S-enantiomer of 136 is expected to have an even higher cytotoxicity. In vitro studies have shown that the natural S-enantiomer of the analogues of the anti-tumour antibiotics have superior potency compared to the R-enantiomers. Furthermore, in vivo studies of hypoxia-selective nitro analogues of the anti-tumour antibiotics indicated that the R-enantiomer was inactive whilst the S-enantiomer showed significant cytotoxicity greater than the racemate as expected. The reduced cytotoxicity of the R-enantiomer has been linked to the different steric interactions with double-stranded DNA. Future enantiomeric purification of 136 to isolate the required stereoisomer should therefore give a molecule with extreme potency.

In order to estimate the cytotoxic effect of the proposed prodrug, the Boc-protected compound 135 was subjected to the MTS assay. LNCaP cells were treated with a range of concentrations of 135 (100 nM → 100 µM) and incubated under the same conditions as described above. The results were presented as percentage inhibition of LNCaP cell viability against the concentration of 135 (Figure 50).
Overall, a given concentration of 135 resulted in lower percentage inhibition compared to 136 at the same concentration. For instance at a concentration of 100 nM, 136 resulted in 91% inhibition whilst 135 caused 36% inhibition. The preliminary IC₅₀ recorded for this compound was 218 nM which is approximately 10-fold lower than the IC₅₀ of 136. This highlights the importance of the seco precursor 136 being able to undergo Winstein cyclisation to form the highly electrophilic cyclopropane ring (Figure 51).

With the Boc-protection, the electron density of the 5-amino group is reduced and thus the Winstein cyclisation is slowed or prevented from happening, leading to reduced activity. It has been suggested that the ideal ratio of cytotoxicity between a prodrug and the corresponding drug (QIC₅₀) [QIC₅₀ = IC₅₀ (prodrug) / IC₅₀ (prodrug + activating enzyme)] should exceed 1000.⁸⁷ The lower observed ratio (~10) between 135 and 136 can be attributed to the fact that the measured cytotoxicities are only preliminary results and therefore further
tests would be required to verify the potency of these drugs. Besides, the higher than expected cytotoxicity of 135, could be due to the Boc-protecting group being cleaved allowing spirocyclisation to form the more reactive cyclopropane ring. Slow cyclisation of the Boc-protected compound 135 may also be responsible. Alternatively, direct alkylation of the DNA by the Boc protected seco compound 135 without formation of the cyclopropane ring may account for the higher than expected cytotoxicity. The type of a prodrug is also very important. For instance, when a β-D-galactoside prodrug was subjected to *in vitro* cytotoxicity assay against human bronchial carcinoma cells of line A549, it was observed to have a lower cytotoxicity than the active drug by a factor of just 80 whilst a benzyl analogue of the same drug showed a lower cytotoxicity by a factor of 1600 compared to the active drug.\textsuperscript{125} Compound 135 as a carbamate prodrug is not as stable as the proposed amide prodrug that would be synthesised by coupling of 136 to a PSA-cleavable peptide. Non-enzymatic cleavage of the carbamate group occurs easier than an amide bond. Having an amide prodrug as well as coupling of the drug to the bulky peptide and polymer will further reduce the cytotoxicity of the prodrug and give a higher QIC\textsubscript{50} value.

### 3.9 Peptide synthesis

With the synthesis of the active drug 136, the next step involved the synthesis of the PSA-cleavable peptide intended to be used in the development of the prodrug. The amino-acid sequence Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln is claimed to be the minimal sequence required for recognition and cleavage by PSA.\textsuperscript{99} The protected sequence Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-OH containing the minimum required sequence was synthesised as a substrate for PSA. An attempt was made to use solution-phase peptide synthesis to make the peptide. Difficulties mainly due to the presence of the primary amide side-chain of Gln, often affect solution phase synthesis of Gln-containing peptides.\textsuperscript{168} These include limited solubility of the Gln reagent and the produced peptide which leads to purification problems. Unwanted side-reactions, such as dehydration at the γ-carboxamide of Gln to produce the corresponding nitrile or cyclisation of carboxy-activated N\textsuperscript{α}-protected Gln to N\textsuperscript{α}-protected α-aminoglutarimides, can occur during the synthesis in peptides incorporating Gln (Scheme 44).
In order to avoid unwanted side-chain reactions of Gln and enhance solubility of Gln containing peptides, a range of sterically bulky protecting groups of the Gln side-chain have been used. These include 4-methoxybenzyl\textsuperscript{169} 2,4-dimethoxybenzyl\textsuperscript{169, 170} 2,4,6-trimethoxybenzyl\textsuperscript{171} tetralin-1-yl,\textsuperscript{172} monomethoxybenzhydryl,\textsuperscript{173} trityl\textsuperscript{174, 175} and monomethyltrityl.\textsuperscript{176} 2-Nitrobenzyl has also been used as a photo-cleavable protection.\textsuperscript{177} All of these protecting groups have the disadvantage of being atom-inefficient, with the bulky protecting groups containing many atoms and producing involatile side-products upon removal. In order to avoid the solubility issues and undesired reactions presented by Gln during solution-phase peptide synthesis, efforts were made to mask the primary amide side-chain of Gln as the nitrile. Compatibility of the nitrile protection strategy with other protecting groups was also studied.\textsuperscript{178} These studies will then inform on the use of nitrile-Gln in the solution-phase synthesis of the proposed PSA-cleavable peptide.

### 3.9.1 Formation of Fmoc-aminoglutarimide

Reagents and conditions: i. DCC, dry pyridine, N\textsubscript{2}, r.t., 3 h; ii. (CF\textsubscript{3}CO)\textsubscript{2}O, dry pyridine, THF, N\textsubscript{2}, 0°C 6 h.
Dehydration of the Gln primary amide side-chain was attempted using Fmoc-Gln-OH 155 as a model substrate. Fmoc-Gln-OH 155 in pyridine was treated with the dehydrating agent, dicyclohexylcarbodiimide (DCC) at room temperature.\textsuperscript{179} This led to the cyclised dehydrated product, the imide 157, at 48% yield, rather than the desired product of dehydration of primary amide 156 (Scheme 45). Treatment of 155 with pyridine and trifluoroacetic anhydride\textsuperscript{180} also resulted in 157 at 59% yield. Scheme 46 provides mechanisms for these cyclisation reactions.

\textbf{Scheme 46:} Mechanism for formation of Fmoc-glutarimide with DCC and with trifluoroacetic anhydride.

Pyridine deprotonates the carboxylic acid group of 155 to form the carboxylate anion. This reacts with DCC to form the acyl isourea. Intra-molecular attack at the activated carbonyl of the acylisourea by the weakly nucleophilic nitrogen of the primary amide results in the cyclised imide, with dicyclohexylurea as the powerful leaving group.

\textbf{3.9.2 The use of β-cyanomethyl-L-Ala as a masked form of L-glutamine}

\textbf{Scheme 47:} Dehydration of the side-chain amide of Gln to give the nitrile. \textit{Reagents and conditions:} i. DCC, dry pyridine, N\textsubscript{2}, r.t., 16 h.
With the difficulties encountered with Fmoc-Gln-OH 155, a different Nα-protected Gln was used to test if the presence of the Fmoc-protecting group had any influence in the formation of the glutarimide 157. Interestingly, treatment of Cbz-Gln-OH 162 with DCC in pyridine gave the nitrile 163 at 82% yield (Scheme 47). This result suggested that, the Fmoc protecting group favours the cyclisation reaction whilst the Cbz protecting group favours the formation of the nitrile. Scheme 48 shows a proposed mechanism in the synthesis of 163.

\[ \text{Scheme 48: Proposed mechanism for the dehydration of the } \gamma\text{-carboxamide side-chain of glutamine to form the nitrile.} \]

After the formation of the isourea “mixed anhydride” 164, removal of a proton from the side-chain amide leads to the formation of the imidate. Cyclisation to form the pyranone ring 166, followed by base-catalysed elimination then gives the nitrile 163.

Beauchard et al.\textsuperscript{178} investigated the ability to incorporate Gln(CN) into peptide chains and also its compatibility with other protecting groups (Scheme 49) [experiments conducted by Anne Beauchard].
To test the ability to couple Gln(CN) to a growing peptide chain, the dipeptide L-Leu-D-Ser(OBu\textsuperscript{t})-OMe 169 was synthesised. Cbz-L-Leu-OH 167 was coupled with D-Ser(OB\textsuperscript{t})OMe using benzotriazol-1-yl-oxytripyrrolidinophosphonium hexafluorophosphate (PyBOP) as the coupling agent. Initial nucleophilic attack of the positively charged phosphorus atom of PyBOP by the carboxylate anion of 167 forms the phosphonium ester, eliminating benzotriazolate anion in the process. This anion subsequently substitutes the phosphonium ester to give the more reactive benzotriazole ester, which then reacts with D-Ser(OBu\textsuperscript{t})-OMe to give 168 in an excellent yield of 95%. Hydrogenolysis of 168 removed the Cbz group to give the dipeptide 169 L-Leu-D-Ser(OBu\textsuperscript{t})-OMe. This was then coupled with N-Cbz-\beta-cyanomethyl-L-Ala 163 using O-(7-azabenzo\textsubscript{3}triazol-1-yl)-N,N,N\textprime,N\textprime-tetramethyluronium hexafluorophosphate (HATU) to test compatibility of this coupling method with the nitrile
group. This afforded the protected tripeptide 170 at a yield of 77% demonstrating that Gln(CN) can be added easily to growing peptide chain. Removal of the Cbz protecting group was effected with hydrogen and palladium-on-carbon catalyst to give 171 without any sign of competing reduction of the nitrile group. Coupling of 171 with Cbz-L-Leu-OH 167 led to the protected peptide 172 showing that peptide coupling at the N-terminus of Gln(CN) are efficient. Regeneration of Gln was achieved via mild hydration with hydroperoxide under basic conditions to give 173 without hydrolysis to the acid (Glu) or hydrolysis of the methyl ester. To test the stability / compatibility of the nitrile in acidic conditions, removal of the tert-butyl protection of 172 was undertaken using trifluoroacetic acid to give 174. Condensation of 174 with 2,2-dimethoxypropane under acid catalysis gave 175 which contains both the C-terminal D-Dmo residue (which can be considered as a masked D-Ser, a pseudoproline) and the β-cyanomethyl-L-Ala (masked Gln). The tert-butyl group of Cbz-Gln(CN)-Leu-D-Ser(Obu')-OMe 170 was also removed under acidic conditions, followed by condensation with 2,2-dimethoxypropane to give 177. Scheme 50 gives a further demonstration of the compatibility of Gln(CN) in solution-phase peptide synthesis.

The protected dipeptide Cbz-Gln(CN)-Ala-OMe 178 was prepared by coupling L-Ala-OMe with Cbz-Gln(CN)-OH 163 using PyBOP. Hydrogenolysis of the N-terminal Cbz-protecting group of 178 afforded 179 (Scheme 50). Careful monitoring of the hydrogenolysis was needed since prolonged reaction time resulted in reduction of the nitrile group to form 182 followed by a possible cyclisation to form 183 (Figure 52). Reducing the reaction time from 16 h to 2 h allowed the synthesis of 179 without reduction of the nitrile. When this compound
was left at room temperature overnight, NMR spectra suggested that some of the compound had cyclised to give the diketopiperazine \textbf{184} (Figure 52).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig52.png}
\caption{Possible products from prolonged hydrogenolysis of Cbz-Gln(CN)-Ala-OMe.}
\end{figure}

Synthesis of Boc-Ala-Gln(CN)-Ala-OMe \textbf{180} was achieved by immediate coupling of \textbf{179} to Boc-L-Ala-OH using HATU as the coupling agent (Scheme 50). Hydration of the nitrile group of \textbf{180} with the hydro-peroxide anion had to be carried out carefully to avoid side reactions. Carrying out the reaction at room temperature using hydrogen peroxide / sodium hydroxide resulted in hydrolysis of the methyl ester group as well as hydration of the nitrile. The reaction was repeated with the hindered base potassium tert-butoxide and urea hydrogen peroxide in methanol. At room temperature, no progression of the reaction occurred highlighting the reduced reactivity of the reagents. Heating the reaction at 40°C resulted in hydration of the nitrile but also hydrolysis of the methyl ester. The use of diisopropylethylamine as a base with aqueous hydrogen peroxide or urea hydrogen peroxide resulted in a mixture of products. The reaction had to be carried out at 0°C with sequential addition of aqueous hydrogen peroxide and sodium hydroxide and the mixture carefully neutralised at this temperature before bringing to room temperature to avoid hydrolysis of the ester. Neutralisation with aqueous hydrogen chloride proved problematic due to the risk of losing the Boc-protecting group. Sodium thiosulfate was therefore used to quench the reaction. Careful hydration of the nitrile \textbf{180} without disruption of the N-Boc protection and the methyl ester was achieved using 35% w/w aqueous hydrogen peroxide and 1 M aqueous sodium hydroxide in methanol to afford \textbf{181} at a modest yield of 23%. This low yield was mainly due to slow progression of the reaction since the majority of the starting material was recovered. Longer reaction time or the use of excess reagents should improve the yield.
3.9.3 Hydration of terminal Gln nitrile group

After proving the concept of masking the side-chain amide of Gln as a nitrile, within the peptide chain, the possibility of regenerating the amide side-chain was investigated when Gln(CN) is the C-terminal amino-acid. This is important because, in the proposed PSA-cleavable pentapeptide to be synthesised, Gln is the C-terminal amino-acid. Attempted hydration of Cbz-Gln(CN)-OH 163 using aqueous hydrogen peroxide and sodium hydroxide resulted in hydrolysis of the nitrile group completely to the carboxylate (Scheme 51).

![Scheme 51: Proposed mechanism for hydrolysis of 163 to 188. Reagent and conditions: aq. \( \text{H}_2\text{O}_2 \), NaOH, r.t., 30 min.](image)

The proposed mechanism (Scheme 51) suggests an intra-molecular nucleophilic attack by the \( \alpha \)-carboxylate of 163 to form imino-oxotetrahydropyran 185. This seems to out-compete the inter-molecular attack of the nitrile group by hydroperoxide ion. Nucleophilic attack by hydroxide ion on the imidate 185 results in a tetrahedral intermediate 186 from which ammonia leaves to yield the cyclic anhydride 187. Further nucleophilic attack by hydroxide ion yields Cbz-Glu-OH 188. This result suggested that the strategy of hydrating Gln(CN) at the C-terminus of the proposed PSA-cleavable peptide, Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln, will not be useful. A decision was therefore made to use solid-phase peptide synthesis to circumvent the difficulties presented by Gln when used in solution phase peptide synthesis.
3.9.4 Solid-phase peptide synthesis

Solid-phase peptide synthesis allows sequential coupling of α-protected-amino and side-chain-protected amino-acids onto an insoluble polymeric support (Scheme 52). Removal of the protection from the α-amine allows subsequent amino-acids to be added using a coupling agent or pre-activated amino-acid derivative. The synthesised peptide is attached to the polymer via a linker through the C-terminus of the peptide. Cleavage of the peptide from the resin and followed by removal of the protecting groups gives the desired peptide. One advantage of solid-phase synthesis over solution phase peptide synthesis is that it allows excess reagents to be washed out of the reaction at each coupling stage, obviating the need for purification at each step of the synthesis. Besides, the use of dimethylformamide means that masking the side-chain primary amide group of Gln is not necessary as Gln is soluble in dimethylformamide. Peptides was synthesised using standard Fmoc solid-phase peptide synthesis [benzotriazol-1-ylxy-trispyrrolidino-phosphonium hexafluorophosphate (PyBOP) / N,N-diisopropylethylamine (Pr2NEt) couplings]. 2-Chlorotrityl chloride polystyrene resin was used to enable mild acidolytic cleavage of the peptide from the 2-chlorotrityl linker without removal of the N-terminal Fmoc protecting group or the side-chain protecting groups. This resin also avoids epimerisation making it ideal for synthesis of sensitive residues. The bulk of the trityl linker also helps to prevent formation of diketopiperazines from dipeptide intermediates. Furthermore, other side-reactions such as reattachment of residues during acidic cleavage and side-chain deprotection, are minimised.

Scheme 52: Solid phase peptide synthesis cycle and coupling of amino-acids to 2-chlorotrityl chloride resin.
3.9.4.1 Synthesis of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-OH (189)

The synthesis of 189 began by loading Fmoc-Gln-OH onto 2-chlorotrityl chloride polystyrene under anhydrous conditions, using excess Pr$_2$N,$\text{Et}$, a non-nucleophilic tertiary amine base to generate the more nucleophilic carboxylate. The nucleophilic carboxylate group attacks the aliphatic carbon of 2-chlorotrityl chloride to substitute the chlorine atom with an ester group. The remaining trityl chloride units of the resin were capped by treatment with methoxide to substitute the chlorine with a methoxy group. This prevents reaction of subsequent amino-acids directly with the resin. The loading attained was 73%. In each cycle, the Fmoc-protection was removed by treatment of the resin with piperidine (20% v/v in DMF) and the remaining amino-acids (Fmoc-Leu-OH, Fmoc-Lys(Cbz), Fmoc-Ser(OBn) ($\times$ 2), respectively were added stepwise using PyBOP as the coupling reagent to activate the carboxy component of the N$^\alpha$-protected amino-acid. The side-chain protections of Fmoc-Ser(OBn) and Fmoc-Lys(Cbz) was chosen to ensure orthogonality with the cleavage of the N-terminal Fmoc-protecting group and also the C-terminal chlorotrityl group. The benzyl and carboxybenzyl protections can be removed under the same conditions which will reduce the number of different deprotection reactions required. These cycles yielded the resin-bound Fmoc-protected pentapeptide, which was cleaved from the resin with 1% v/v trifluoroacetic acid in dichloromethane to give the required protected pentapeptide 189 in 93% yield. Trifluoroacetic acid serves as a source of protons to protonate the carbonyl group at the C-terminal of the resin-bound peptide. This results in the cleavage of the trityl O-bond and release of the peptide. The process also results in generation of the highly stabilised chloro trityl carbocation, which can be trapped with scavengers (e.g. triisopropylsilane). The use of scavengers is only important when highly nucleophilic groups are present in the peptide.

\[
\text{Figure 53: Structure of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-OH.}
\]
residue (e.g. Trp, Met, Tyr, Cys). If these nucleophilic groups are absent / protected, then the use of scavengers becomes unnecessary.  

### 3.10 Synthesis of 1-benzylxyisoquinolin-5-amine (193) as a model drug

To test the proposed polymeric prodrug system for release of an aromatic amine such as the seco-CBI 136, a model drug was synthesised. This will enable the assessment of the ease of coupling aromatic amine directly to the peptide 189 and also whether PSA can selectively cleave the peptide-drug conjugate at the planned site. The model drug 193 was chosen due to its structural similarities to the proposed CBI drug. Besides, the model drug is non-toxic unlike α-naphthylamine which is the obvious choice as a model drug but is implicated in bladder cancer. 183 Furthermore, once coupled to the pentapeptide 189, the benzyl group of the model drug together with Bn and Cbz group of the pentapeptide 189 would be cleaved in one step affording the delivery of 5-aminoisoquinolin-1-one, a well-known PARP-1 inhibitor. 184-187

![Scheme 53: Synthesis of 5-AIQ-model drug. Reagents and conditions: i. H2SO4 / HNO3, 0°C for 2 h then r.t. for 10 min; ii. benzyl alcohol, NaH, dry DMF, r.t. for 15 min then 100°C for 2 h; iii. MeOH, Pd/C, NaBH4 r.t. for 30 min then HCl.]

The model drug 193 was made by firstly nitrating 1-chloroisoquinoline 190 to give 191 at a yield of 66%. It was important to protonate and deactivate fully 190 before addition of the nitrating reagents to ensure selective nitration at the C5 position. 184 The next step was a SNAr nucleophilic substitution (addition / elimination reaction) of the 1-chlorine with a benzylxy group. This was effected by reaction of 191 with sodium benzylxide under anhydrous conditions to give 192. Selective reduction of the nitro group without loss of the OBn was tried with different reagents, including tin(II) chloride, palladium on carbon / sodium borohydride and palladium on carbon / ammonium formate. The reaction was tried at 0°C, room temperature and under reflux to determine the optimum conditions. All the conditions, however, resulted in reductive removal of the benzyl group to give 5-aminoisoquinolin-1-one (5-AIQ) 194 as well as the desired product 193. Palladium on carbon / sodium borohydride

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127
were selected to reduce the nitro group of 192 due to the ability to control the number of hydrogen equivalents added in order to limit the reduction of the benzyl group. This allowed the synthesis of 193 at a yield of 33%.

3.11 Coupling of model drug to peptide

An attempt was made to couple the synthesised model drug 193 with the peptide 189. The pentafluorophenyl active ester 195 was synthesised using pentafluorophenol with dicyclohexylcarbodiimide (DCC) as the coupling reagent. DCC served to activate the carboxylate group of 189 to nucleophilic attack by the in situ generated pentafluorophenoxide. Mass spectrometry confirmed that the pentafluorophenyl ester 195 was formed \([m/z: 1264.5141 \text{ (M + H)}]\). Owing to purification difficulties as well as instability of the pentafluorophenyl ester, an attempt was made to couple the model drug 193 directly to the crude pentafluorophenyl ester to give 196. This, however, failed and also caused loss of the Fmoc group in some cases. PyBOP-activated 189 was also investigated to couple the model drug but this failed too.
3.12 Synthesis of 4-methoxynaphthalen-1-amine (200) as a model drug

The challenges faced with coupling of 193 to the peptide led to the synthesis of a new model drug. 4-Aminonaphthalen-1-ol hydrochloride 31 was considered as a candidate to convert into a model drug. Silyl protection is known to be selective for hydroxy groups over amines due to the stability of the silicon-oxygen bond. Silyl protection of the phenolic group of 31 with chlorotrimethylsilane to give 197, however, failed.

![Scheme 55: Synthesis of naphthalene-based model drug. Reagents and conditions: i. (a) Chlorotrimethylsilane, imidazole, THF, Ar, r.t., 24 h; (b) Chlorotrimethylsilane, Et3N, dry DMF, N2, 72 h; ii. (a) Acetyl chloride, Et3N, THF, N2, r.t., 30 min; (b) Ac2O, Et3N, MeOH, 50°C, 1 h; iii. MeI, K2CO3, acetone, reflux, 16 h; iv. aq. HCl (3.0 M), MeOH, 90°C, 4 h.]

The next idea was to acetylate the amino group of 31 followed by protection of the phenolic group and then deacetylation to yield the model drug 200. Due to risk of O-acetylation in the presence of excess base, as observed with 2-nitro-4-aminonaphthalen-1-ol 40 (Scheme 14), only one equivalent of triethylamine was used to free the amino group of 31. Even if non-selective acetylation should occur, the O-acetyl group, being an ester, should be easier to hydrolyse without cleavage of the N-acetyl group. Acetylation of the amino group of 31 with acetyl chloride gave a mixture of several products. Purification resulted in the isolation of 198 at a very low yield (~2%). It was thought that the acetyl chloride might have been too reactive resulting in formation of several products. Acetylation of 31 was therefore effected with acetic anhydride to give 198 at a yield of 93%. Methylation of the phenolic group of 198 was carried out using methyl iodide with potassium carbonate as the base, giving rise to 199. Acidic hydrolysis of the N-acetyl group 199 gave 4-methoxynaphthalen-1-amine 200 as the new model drug. The next step was to couple this model drug to the proposed PSA-cleavable peptide 189.
3.13 Coupling of 4-methoxynaphthalen-1-amine to proposed PSA-cleavable peptide

Coupling of 4-methoxynaphthalen-1-amine 200, was initially attempted with pentafluorophenol and DCC or 1-ethyl-3-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)carbodiimide hydrochloride (EDC.HCl). This procedure, however, did not yield the desired results. Activation with EDC.HCl / hydroxybenzotriazole was then employed. The carboxyl group of 189 reacts with the EDC.HCl to form the O-acylurea which can react with 4-amethoxynaphthalen-1-amine to yield the product. The use of carbodiimide coupling agents in peptide synthesis tends to be associated with oxazolone formation leading to epimerisation. Hydroxybenzotriazole acts to reduce epimerisation by reacting with the O-acylurea to give the benzotriazole active ester which enhances reactivity by encouraging / stabilising the approaching amine via hydrogen bonding.\(^{159}\) Nucleophilic substitution of the benzotriazolyl ester by 200 gave the crude peptide-model drug 201 (Scheme 56). As mentioned before, the unprotected primary amide side-chain of Gln results in solubility issues during solution-phase peptide synthesis. Purification of 201 therefore proved very challenging. The peptide-model
drug conjugate did not have appreciable solubility in either organic or aqueous solvents. Extraction and chromatography could therefore not be used to purify 201. The insolubility of the peptide was, however, exploited in its purification by repeated trituration with Et₂O and hot methanol affording 201 at a yield of 78%. Deprotection of acid-labile Cbz and benzyl protecting groups of 201 was effected with hydrogen bromide in acetic acid. Precipitation of the deprotected peptide (now a hydrobromide salt at the Lys side-chain) interestingly gave a product with a mass of eighty-four units higher than the expected mass. NMR investigation into this showed that both the serine β-hydroxy groups had been acetylated. Clearly, the hydrogen bromide was a strong enough acid to catalyse the esterification with solvent acetic acid under these conditions to give 202. The deprotection of 201 was repeated using the same reagents, hydrogen bromide in acetic acid. After completion of the reaction, methanol was added to methanolysé the acetate esters to give 203. Compound 203 was then subjected to enzyme assay to assess the ability of PSA to cleave the model drug.

3.14 Study on the PSA-catalysed cleavage of Fmoc-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-4-methoxynaphthalenamide

The ability of PSA to cleave the peptide and release the model drug was investigated. Compound 203 (~2 mM) was incubated with PSA (10 mM) at 37°C. The reaction was carried out in 50 mM Tris-HCl and 140 mM NaCl buffer at pH 7.4. These conditions were chosen in an attempt to mimic physiological conditions. A control experiment was also set up without the enzyme to make sure that cleavage is due to the action of PSA. Samples were taken at different time intervals and added to a solution of ZnCl₂ (20 mM) to precipitate the enzyme. Centrifugation followed by HPLC analysis of the supernatant, however, did not detect any product or starting material. The absence of product or starting material in the supernatant led to the conclusion that the starting materials / product do not have sufficient aqueous solubility. This was supported by the observation that precipitates formed in the reaction mixture about 2 h into the experiment. The collected precipitates after centrifugation were suspended in methanol to dissolve the peptide. Analysis of the supernatant, however, showed that cleavage by the enzyme had not occurred, as only starting material 203 was detected. The lack of cleavage was attributed to the precipitation of the starting material during the experiment. The insolubility of the peptide-model drug conjugate 203 was attributed to the Fmoc-protecting group. The synthesis of peptide-model drug conjugate without the Fmoc-protecting group was pursued.
3.15 Synthesis of Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide

Scheme 57: Synthesis of peptide-model drug conjugate 205. Reagents and conditions: i. Piperidine / DMF 1:5, 20°C, 45 min; HBr in AcOH, 20°C, 2 h then MeOH.

Treatment of 201 with piperidine removed the Fmoc-protection to give 204. The benzyl-type protecting groups in the side-chains were then removed with hydrogen bromide / acetic acid, to give 205 (63%). This peptide-model drug conjugate was then subjected to enzyme assay to ascertain if PSA could release the model drug directly from the peptide.
3.16 Study on PSA-cleavage of Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide

Compound 205 (~2 mM) was incubated with PSA (10 mM) at 37°C. The reaction was carried out in 50 mM Tris-HCl and 140 mM NaCl buffer at pH 7.4. A control experiment was also set up to make sure that cleavage was due to the action of PSA. Samples were taken at different time intervals and added to a solution of ZnCl₂ (20 mM) in order to precipitate the enzyme. The mixture stayed clear throughout the experiment, indicating the enhanced water solubility of 205 compared to 203. HPLC analysis at 280 nM and 220 nM of the supernatant over 7 d, however, showed the presence of only starting material. This observation could be due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the activity of the enzyme was not ascertained before the experiments. Very low activity of the enzyme will require higher amounts to be used in order to observe cleavage. Carrying out an activity test of PSA using the commercially available PSA substrate, Mu-His-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-AMC, would help clarify this. Furthermore, it is possible that the proposed peptide is not a substrate for PSA. However, this reason is unlikely since from literature it has been established that the HSSKLQ is cleavable by PSA. 99 Denmeade et al. also showed that shorter amino-acid sequences SKLQ and KLQ were both cleavable by PSA. 99 Synthesis of the polymeric prodrug system was pursued further with coupling of the peptide-model drug to poly(ethylene glycol). This together with 205 can then be tested against a new batch of active PSA.

3.17 The synthesis of polymeric peptide-model drug

Polymeric prodrugs enable the exploitation of the EPR effect when used to treat solid tumours like prostate cancer. The polymer serves to increase the molecular weight of the prodrug and thus restricts its diffusion across blood vessels of healthy tissues whilst allowing easy diffusion across the leaky blood vessels of cancer tissues. The size of the polymer means there is reduced renal excretion. This together with the fact that solid tumours have poor lymphatic drainage systems, promotes selective accumulation of drugs at tumour sites, thereby reducing unwanted side-effects. 112, 114 The proposed prodrug system for the delivery of potent anti-tumour agents consists of a polymer, the linking peptide and the active drug. With the synthesis of the peptide-model drug conjugate, the next step in the synthesis is to couple the peptide-model drug conjugate to a polymer (Scheme 58).
The polymer chosen is this instance is poly(ethylene glycol) (PEG). This polymer is widely used in pharmaceuticals due to its non-toxicity, non-immunogenicity and its ability to improve the water solubility of drugs. The proposed ideal molecular weight needed for the exploitation of EPR effect is said to be ~20 KDa. Linear PEG (~5 KDa) was chosen to establish the chemistry with the aim of eventually using PEG (~20 KDa). Furthermore, coupling was made to only one end of the linear PEG. The hydroxy group of the commercially available monomethoxy poly(ethylene glycol) (mPEG, MW ~5000 g mol$^{-1}$) had
to be functionalised so it could be coupled to the peptide-drug conjugate 204 (Scheme 58). The polymer comes with high moisture content which interferes with the functionalisation of the hydroxy group. It therefore had to be pre-dried through azeotropic distillation with toluene. The hydroxy group of monomethoxy poly(ethylene glycol) (MW ~5000 g mol$^{-1}$) 206 was converted into the electrophilic nitrophenyl carbonate 207 using 4-nitrophenyl chloroformate. The nitrophenyl carbonate 207 was coupled with 204 to give 208. This was confirmed by mass spectrometry. Removal of the protection group of 208 will then give the polymeric peptide prodrug 209 which can be tested to ascertain if prostate specific antigen can cleave the peptide to release the model drug. Figure 55 and Figure 54 shows the mass spectra for 207 and 208 respectively.

Figure 54: Mass spectra for 208 showing multiply cationised species.
The samples were prepared in an acidic media in order to reduce the chances of getting the Na\textsuperscript{+}-cationised polymers. Due to the size of the polymer, detected ions are usually multiply charged. Most polymers have a degree of polydispersity which gives a bell-shaped distribution in the spectra. The distribution pattern of the peaks in each bell-shaped distribution helps identify the kind of polymer and the number of charges on the polymer. The molecular weight of the repeating unit of PEG is forty-four and, therefore, for a mono-charged species, one will observe peaks separated by forty-four units. This also means that for doubly charged species, a separation of twenty-two units should be observed between peaks. Expansion of the region in spectrum-A, corresponding to species with double charge shows a distribution twenty-two units apart (spectrum-B), confirming the nature of polymer and charge. A comparison between the mass spectra for 207 and 208 shows an average increase in molecular weight per given charge distribution. For instance the average MW of the quadruply charged species of 207 (Figure 55) is 1445.78. An average molecular weight of ~1668.65 will be expected for the quadruply charged species of 208 (Figure 54). The average molecular weight observed for the quadruply charged species is ~1627.66 which is close enough to the predicted value to suggest that coupling of the peptide to the polymer occurred. The difficulty in finding a peak that corresponds exactly to the predicted value is mainly due to the extended polydispersity of the polymer. Also for multiply charged polymers, there will be both Na\textsuperscript{+} and H\textsuperscript{+}-cationised polymers which complicates efforts to identify an exact m/z. The \textsuperscript{1}H NMR spectrum of 208 showed a downfield chemical shift for the \(\alpha\)-H of the N-
terminal serine ($3.62 \rightarrow 4.12$) when compared to the uncoupled peptide 204. This confirmed that this N-terminal amino-acid had been acylated.

### 3.18 Investigation into the use of molecular clip

PSA, as an endopeptidase, tend to cleave peptide bonds between amino-acids. A study by Denmeade et al., however, showed that PSA was able to cleave 7-amino-4-methyl coumarin directly from a PSA-cleavable peptide.\(^9^9\) This led to the synthesis of the pentapeptide 189 and the subsequent coupling to a model drug and enzyme assay of this prodrug system. In order to deal with a situation whereby an active PSA fails to cleave a drug directly from the pentapeptide, a heptapeptide [Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-Leu-D-Ser-OH] was synthesised with the intention of inserting a dipeptide molecular clip (Leu-Dmo) between the PSA-cleavable peptide (SSKLQ) and the attached drug. This will allow PSA to cleave between Gln and Leu followed by subsequent cyclisation to release the drug (Scheme 59).

**Scheme 59:** Proposed mechanism for the release of seco-CBIs by PSA-cleavage and spontaneous cyclisation.

The rate of cyclisation of dipeptide linkers is based on the proportion in the cis-amide conformation.\(^8^3,1^0^4\) 5,5-Dimethyl-4-oxaproline (Dmo) have been found to force peptides into a 100% cis-amide conformation allowing rapid cyclisation to form diketopiperazine.\(^1^0^6,1^0^8\) Insertion of a molecular clip containing the Dmo unit between the PSA-cleavable peptide and the model drug will allow rapid intra-molecular cyclisation of the dipeptide linker to release the drug once the peptide is cleaved by PSA.\(^8^3\) The pseudoproline dipeptide linker, Leu-R-Dmo was selected as the molecular clip to investigate due to the proven ability to generate the Dmo unit within a growing peptide.\(^1^0^9\) The Dmo will initially be introduced as a C-terminal D-Ser in the heptapeptide (SSKLQLS). Intraresidual N,O-acetalisation of the side-chain hydroxy group and the preceding amide nitrogen of D-Ser with 2,2-dimethoxypropane should
generate the \( R \)-Dmo unit. L-Leu-\( R \)-Dmo corresponds to the \( L,S \) series of Dmt (5,5-dimethyl-4-thiaprolin) pseudoproline. The \( L,S \)-Dmt molecular clips have been shown to cyclise at a faster rate than the \( L,R \)-Dmt series.\(^{105,106}\) The rate of cyclisation of the \textit{cis-pseudoproline} dipeptide molecular clips further depends on the conformation about the \( \text{C}^\alpha \) of the N-terminal amino-acids (Scheme 60).

Dipeptide molecular clips must adopt conformer \textbf{211A} rather than other conformers such as \textbf{211B} where the reacting amine is pointing away from the target carbonyl. Conformer \textbf{221A} was shown to be more sterically accessible in the \( L,S \) series of Aaa-Dmt (corresponding to L-Aaa-\( R \)-Dmo) facilitating rapid cyclisation and expulsion of drug.\(^{106}\) Use of Leu-\( R \)-Dmo should therefore lead to rapid release of drug. Leu has been chosen as part of the proposed dipeptide molecular clip because it has been shown to be essential for cleavage by PSA at the appropriate site. For instance, replacement of Leu with Val in the synthesis of the PSA-cleavable peptide, Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-Val-Dmt caused PSA to release Gln-Val-Dmt rather than the desired Val-Dmt. This meant rapid cyclisation to release drug attached to the C-terminal was not possible.\(^{105}\)
3.19 Synthesis of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-Leu-D-Ser-OH

The heptapeptide (Scheme 61) was made by solid-phase synthesis. Cleavage from the 2-chlorotrityl chloride linker with trifluoroacetic acid (1% v/v) led to 213 (89%) with the tert-butyl protecting group intact whilst cleavage with trifluoroacetic acid (50%) gave 214 without loss of other protecting groups.

**Scheme 61:** Synthesis of heptapeptide 214. Reagents and conditions: i. CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (1:1), r.t., 2 h.
3.20 The synthesis of 5,5-dimethyl-4-oxaproline (Dmo) molecular clip

The C-terminal D-Ser of 214 had been introduced as a precursor to Leu-R-Dmo molecular clip. The next steps studied conversion of the D-Ser into the R-Dmo pseudoproline in the protected heptapeptide 214 to give 215. Intraresidual N,O-acetalisation of the side-chain hydroxy group and the preceding amide nitrogen of D-Ser was attempted with 2,2-dimethoxypropane (DMP) applying catalytic amounts of para-toluenesulfonic acid (pTsOH). The first attempt was carried out in toluene under microwave conditions but this resulted in decomposition of the peptide. The same result was obtained when the reaction was repeated under reflux using a Dean-Stark apparatus. One possibility for this failure was thought to be the poor solubility of 215 in the solvent used (toluene). The solvent was changed to dimethylformamide / dichloromethane and the reaction repeated for longer periods of time (up to 96 h). This, however, gave only decomposed products as well as starting materials. Aggregation of the peptide was thought to be one of the reasons why this reaction was unsuccessful. This means the site of reaction is sterically hindered and therefore the 2,2-dimethoxypropane molecule does not get access.

Figure 56: Structure of Fmoc-Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-Leu-R-Dmo.
The tetrapeptide 216 was synthesised to ascertain the ability to generate Dmo within a shorter peptide chain (Scheme 62).

Intraresidual N,O-acetalisation was tested on this compound using 2,2-dimethoxypropane and para-toluensulfonic acid. At 40°C for 3 d, traces of the desired product 217 were observed by mass spectrometry, together with decomposed products. Repeating this reaction at a higher temperature (70°C) led to no detectable product. This suggests that the peptide is not stable at higher temperatures and, therefore, this reaction should be tested at lower temperatures. Using a shorter peptide chain in the synthesis of the molecular clip might also be advantageous. Although regioselective insertion of pseudoproline systems into complex peptides such as cyclosporine C has been achieved, most pseudoprolines have been synthesised as dipeptides. One way of dealing with this will therefore be to synthesise the Dmo unit on a shorter peptide chain with protection at the C-terminal carboxyl group. The synthesis of the molecular clip as the dipeptide (Leu-R-Dmo) to be coupled to the remaining amino-acids should, however, be avoided. This is because rapid cyclisation into the diketopiperazine is likely to occur making it difficult to couple to other amino-acids. Synthesising the molecular clip within a tripeptide as in 177 or a tetrapeptide as in 175 (Scheme 49) will allow one to couple the remaining amino-acids employing solution-phase synthesis. In this instance since Gln is not a terminal amino-acid, it can be masked as the nitrile to aid solubility. The nitrile can be hydrated to the amide without running the risk of over hydration to the carboxylate. Synthesis of 215 will be followed by coupling to the model drug 200 and removal of the
protecting groups to test the peptide-molecular clip-drug conjugate for enzymatic cleavage. This peptide-molecular clip-drug-conjugate will further be coupled to poly(ethylene glycol) and then subjected to more *in vitro* assays.

The total synthesis of an analogue of the anti-tumour antibiotics has been achieved and biological evaluation undertaken to confirm its potency. The development of the polymeric prodrug system saw the synthesis of the model drug 200 which was coupled to the proposed PSA-cleavable peptide 189. The peptide-model drug conjugate was further coupled to poly(ethylene glycol) to form the polymeric prodrug system. Enzymatic assay to test the ability of PSA to cleave the drug directly from the peptide, however, faced various challenges. This led to the synthesis of the heptapeptide 214 with the intention of inserting a molecular clip between the PSA-cleavable peptide and the drug. Insertion of the *pseudo*proline molecular clip (Leu-R-Dmo) into the heptapeptide 214 to give 215, however, failed. This has mainly been attributed to the steric bulk of the heptapeptide with a plan to synthesise the Dmo motif on a shorter peptide chain. Future synthesis of 215 will allow coupling to the model drug 200 followed by deprotection to give a peptide-Dmo-drug conjugate that can be investigated as to whether PSA can cleave. A successful cleavage by PSA will lead to the synthesis of polymer-peptide-molecular clip-drug conjugate and subsequent testing against PSA. Once the polymeric-peptide prodrug system is proven, the *seco*-CBI drug 136 will be conjugated with the peptide and the polymer and investigated for PSA triggered release from the polymeric prodrug system.
4 Conclusion

Conventional chemotherapeutic agents have significant limitations which impedes their ability to control tumour growth in patients. These limitations have been mainly attributed to their lack of selective targeting of cancerous cells over normal cells. CBI anti-tumour antibiotics represent synthetically accessible chemotherapeutic agents with high potency and novel mode of action. The ability to deliver these drugs selectively to prostate tumours will not only address the limitations of current chemotherapeutic agents but will also present a new mode of targeting cancerous cells.

Synthesis of the proposed seco-CBI drug 136 was addressed in two parts, namely, synthesis of the alkylating subunit and synthesis of the non-alkylating subunit. The key naphthalene intermediate, tert-butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-4-yl) carbamate 67 with iodo at C1 and orthogonally protected N2- and N4-amines was essential for the synthesis of the alkylating subunit. One of the main challenges faced in the synthesis of 67 was unintended de-iodination of 1-iodo-2,4-naphthalendiamines. Attempted acidic removal of the tert-butoxycarbonyl groups of N,N'-bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine 25 led to either selective de-iodination to give 59 or de-iodination with deprotection to give naphthalene-1,3-diamine 58 (Scheme 21). This observation triggered an extensive NMR studies to ascertain the reason for de-iodination. At 0°C, it was observed that 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine was stable in trifluoroacetic acid whilst, at 20°C, an unexpected Wheland-like intermediate in the de-iodination process was observed. It was also observed that the source of the new proton in the Wheland-like intermediate had an intra-molecular origin. The findings that 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine was stable in trifluoroacetic acid at 0°C led to an effort to trap this compound as the salt and then protect the N4-amino group with tert-butoxycarbonyl (Boc). This, however, led to the isolation of the de-iodinated product, tert-butyl N-(1-aminonaphthalen-3-yl) carbamate 62, with Boc-protection at the N2-amino group (Scheme 21).

This result showed that preventing de-iodination in these compounds was too difficult and also gave a new direction in the synthesis of 67. It was thought that de-iodination occurred first to give naphthalene-1,3-diamine, which then underwent selective protection at the N2-amino group to give 62. This suggested that the N2-amino group was more reactive than the N4-amino group, probably due its higher steric accessibility. Besides, it was found that naphthalene-1,3-diamine 58 could be monoprotected with 2-(tert-butoxycarboxyloxyiminoo)-
2-phenylacetonitrile to give 62 but at a low yield of 8%.\textsuperscript{142} Introduction of trifluoroacetyl protection at the N\textsuperscript{2}-amino group of 58 and tert-butoxycarbonyl at the N\textsuperscript{4}-amino group was followed by electrophilic iodination to give 67. Selective alkylation at the N\textsuperscript{2}-amide of 67 followed by free-radical cyclisation with TEMPO trap and basic removal of the trifluoroacetyl group allowed coupling to the 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carboxylic acid non-alkylating subunit 127. Reductive removal of 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine followed by substitution of the exposed hydroxy group with chlorine gave the Boc-protected CBI drug 135. Acidic removal of the Boc group gave the final seco-CBI drug as its dihydrochloride salt 136.

Calf-thymus DNA melting assay of the synthesised CBI drug 136 was carried out. This confirmed that 136 binds and alkylates double stranded DNA very efficiently to bring about its cytotoxic effects. This effect was observed as an increase in the melting temperature ($T_m$) of dsDNA by as much as 13 deg. C, comparable to the $T_m$ of the known cytotoxic agent, doxorubicin ($T_m = 18$ deg. C). This was despite 136 being the racemate. The (−)-unnatural enantiomers of the anti-tumour antibiotics tend to have a reduced DNA alkylation efficiency compared to the (+)-natural enantiomers.\textsuperscript{61} The significant elevation of the $T_m$ of calf-thymus DNA by 136 therefore suggests that this compound is highly efficient at DNA alkylation.

Preliminary MTS assay of the racemic seco-CBI drug 136 demonstrated that it was a potent cytotoxin, with an IC\textsubscript{50} of 18 nM in LNCaP cells. The cytotoxic effect of the Boc-protected seco-CBI-drug 135 was measured as a rough prediction of the effect of conjugating the seco-CBI drug 136 to the PSA-cleavable peptide to form a prodrug. The observed preliminary IC\textsubscript{50} was 218 nM showing an approximate ten-fold reduction in cytotoxicity compared to the unprotected drug. This suggested that the prodrug concept is viable. The high IC\textsubscript{50} of 135 was attributed to the labile Boc-protection at N\textsuperscript{4}. This meant that Winston cyclisation was probably occurring to form the highly reactive cyclopropane ring, essential for cytotoxicity. The proposed peptide prodrug will form a more stable amide prodrug and therefore avoid unintended cyclisation of the seco-CBI. This should in turn reduce the cytotoxicity of the prodrug and increase the QIC\textsubscript{50}.\textsuperscript{87}

Investigation into a polymeric prodrug system involved firstly the synthesis of the proposed PSA-cleavable peptide SSKLQ. Initial attempts to synthesise this peptide via solution phase was met with solubility problems mainly due to the presence of the unprotected amide side-chain of glutamine. This group was successfully masked as the nitrile to improve solubility.
and reduce the chance of side-reactions. Although this effort proved effective in situations in which the glutamine is not a terminal amino-acid, attempted hydration of the nitrile when the glutamine is a terminal amino-acid resulted in conversion to glutamic acid rather than glutamine. This proved that this technique of masking the amide side-chain of glutamine as a nitrile in the synthesis of the pentapeptide, SSKLQ, was not going to work. Solid-phase peptide synthesis was therefore adopted in the synthesis of the pentapeptide 189. 4-Methoxynaphthalen-1-amine 200 was coupled to the C-terminal of the pentapeptide as a model peptide-drug conjugate. A model polymer-peptide-drug conjugate was also synthesised by coupling of the model drug 200 to the C-terminal of the pentapeptide followed by coupling to poly(ethylene glycol) at the N-terminal. Testing of the ability of PSA to cleave the amide bond between glutamine and the model drug was carried out with the peptide-model drug conjugate. Preliminary results from this assay, however, showed that cleavage did not occur and suggested the need to optimise the assay.

In order to deal with a situation whereby PSA is unable to cleave the drug directly from the peptide, investigations were made into the insertion of self-immolative molecular clip between the drug and the peptide. The heptapeptide SSKLQLS was synthesised to investigate this proposal. Intra-residual N,O-acetalisation of the side-chain hydroxy group and the preceding amide nitrogen of the C-terminal D-Ser to generate the L-Leu-R-Dmo molecular clip, however, proved difficult. This was attributed to the bulky nature of the peptide and the possibility of aggregation leading to steric hindrance. Investigation into the use of a shorter peptide chain to generate the Dmo unit showed great promise as the desired product was detected by mass spectrometry. Dmo synthesis is quite problematic since though it requires acid catalysis, the cleavage of this molecular clip is also effected by acidic conditions. 5,5-Dimethyl-L-proline (dmP)\textsuperscript{191} might be an alternative if the synthesis of Dmo becomes problematic. This pseudoproline (dmP) acts in similar fashion to Dmo but its carbocyclic framework renders it completely stable to acidic conditions. Synthesis of the molecular clip and its incorporation into the peptide will give a PSA-cleavable peptide that can be coupled to the model drug and polymer. PSA cleavage assays of the polymeric prodrug with the molecular clip and that without the molecular clip will be compared to assess the best system for efficient drug release. The most efficient system will then be adopted to synthesise the polymeric prodrug of the seco-CBI 136. Further biological evaluations will then be carried out with PSA-producing prostate cells to check the efficiency of activation of the polymeric prodrug system. The results from such studies will then be used as a guide in optimising the polymeric prodrug system.
5 Experimental

5.1 General

Chemical reagents were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich, Fluka, and Novabiochem. TLC was carried out on Merck aluminium backed TLC plates Silicagel 60 F$_{254}$ and viewed using UV light ($\lambda = 254$ nm). Reverse phase (RP) TLC was performed with RP-18 F254s pre-coated aluminium sheets (0.27 mm thickness). Column chromatography was carried on silica gel 60 (35 – 70 micron). Reverse phase chromatography was carried out using VersaPak C18 (spherical) 23 x 110 mm (bed. wt., 30 g) cartridge. NMR data were obtained on either a Varian Mercury VX (400 MHz for $^1$H and 100 MHz for $^{13}$C) or a Bruker Avance III spectrometer (500 MHz for $^1$H, 125 MHz for $^{13}$C and 470 MHz for $^{19}$F). The chemical shifts are recorded in parts per million (ppm). A single mean value of chemical shift is given for multiplets arising from proton(s) in the same chemical environment whilsts a range value is given for the chemical shift of multiplets arising from protons of different chemical environments. Mass spectrometry was carried out on a micrOTOF™ from Bruker Daltonics (Bremen, Germany) using an electrospray source (ESI-TOF). Melting points were obtained using a Reichert-Jung heated-stage microscope. Optical rotations were measured at ambient temperature using an Optical Activity Ltd AA-10 polarimeter in a cell volume of 5 mL and specific rotations are given in 10$^{-1}$ deg. mL g$^{-1}$. IR spectra were recorded on a Perkin-Elmer 782 infra-red spectrometer using liquid films between NaCl discs or solids as KBr discs and values are given in cm$^{-1}$. Analytical RP-HPLC was performed on a Dionex HPLC system (system 1) equipped with a Dionex UltiMate 3000 HPLC system with a Phenomenex Gemini 5µm C-18 (150 x 4.6 mm) column with a flow rate of 1.0 mL min$^{-1}$. Detecting was at $\lambda = 214$, 220, 254, 280 nm. Mobile phase A was 0.1% (v/v) TFA in water and mobile phase B was 0.1% TFA in acetonitrile. Gradient 1 was T = 0 min, A = 95%; T = 10 min, A = 5%. Gradient 2 was T = 0 min, A = 95%; T = 20 min, A = 5%. Preparative RP-HPLC was performed on a Dionex HPLC system equipped with a Phenomenex Gemini 5µm C-18 (250 x 30 mm) with a flow rate of 22.5 mL min$^{-1}$. Mobile phase A was 0.1% TFA in water and mobile phase B was 0.1% TFA in acetonitrile. Gradient was T = 0 min, A = 95%; T = 20 min, A = 5%. Centrifugation was carried out using Eppendorf MiniSpin centrifuge at 13400 rpm unless otherwise specified. Experiments were conducted at room temperature unless otherwise stated. Solvents were evaporated under reduced pressure. Solutions in organic solvents were dried with MgSO$_4$. 
Reagents for biological experiments were obtained from the Sigma-Aldrich Chemical Co. Fisher Ltd or Invitrogen and were of at least biochemical grade. Aqueous solutions were made in 18.2 Mega-Ω cm⁻¹ Milli-Q water and pH adjusted with HCl or NaOH solutions as appropriate. The pH was monitored using a Corning pH meter 240 and Corning general purpose combination pH electrode, calibrated at pH 7.0 and 10.0 or 4.0 at ambient room temperature. Reagents and plasticware were sterilised where required by autoclaving at 121°C for 15 minutes or were purchased already sterilised. Temperature-sensitive reagents were filtered through a 0.2 µ filter. Tissue culture experiments were carried out in a sterile hood.

The human prostate cancer cell line LNCaP (Sigma-Aldrich) was cultured in Dulbecco’s Modified Eagle’s Medium (DMEM) supplemented with high glucose (4.5 g L⁻¹), 20% (v/v) foetal bovine serum (FBS), penicillin (100 U mL⁻¹) and streptomycin sulfate (100 μg mL⁻¹) at 37°C in humidified atmosphere containing 5% (v/v) CO₂. The MTS assay is based on the reagent: Promega ‘Cell Titer 96® Aqueous One Solution Cell Proliferation Assay’. Centrifugation was carried out using Jouan B3.11 centrifuge at 1300 rpm unless otherwise specified. Perkin Elmer Lambda 40 UV/VIS spectrometer fitted with Perkin Elmer PTP-6 (Peltier Temperature Programmer) was used to monitor DNA melting temperature.

5.2 Benzyl N-(4-hydroxynaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (32)

A suspension of 4-amino-1-naphthol hydrochloride 31 (224 mg, 1.1 mmol) in THF (30 mL) was stirred at −70°C under N₂. Potassium tert-butoxide (1.1 mL of 1.0 M solution in THF, 1.1 mmol) was added dropwise over a 10 min period. The resulting mixture was warmed to −10°C and stirred for 1 h. The mixture was cooled again to −70°C and benzyl chloroformate (216 mg, 1.3 mmol) was added. The mixture was warmed gradually to 20°C and was stirred overnight. The solvent was evaporated. The residue was dissolved in EtOAc and washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:1) gave 32 (207 mg, 62%) as a purple solid: Rᵣ = 0.2 (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:1); ¹H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (COSY / NOESY) δ 5.20 (2 H, s, Ph CH₂), 6.90 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, Naph 3-H), 7.33 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, Naph 2-H), 7.37-7.58 (7 H, m, Naph 6,7-H₂ + Ph H₅), 7.93 (1 H, d, J = 7.8 Hz, Naph 8-H), 8.20 (1 H, dd, J = 8.7, 1.5 Hz, Naph 5-H), 9.29 (1 H, brs, NH), 10.15 (1 H, s, OH); ¹³C NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 65.63 (Ph CH₂), 107.31 (Naph 3-C), 122.25 (Naph 5-C), 122.68 (Naph 8-C), 123.66 (Naph 2-C), 124.59 (Naph 1-C or 7-C or Ph 4-C), 124.69 (Naph 7-C or 1-C or Ph 4-C), 124.73 (Ph 4-C or Naph 1-C or 7-C), 126.09 (Naph 6-C),
127.84 (Ph 3,5-C2), 128.38 (Ph 2,6-C2), 130.18 (Naph 4a,8a-C2), 137.05 (Ph 1-C), 151.33 (Naph 4-C), 155.32 (C=O).

5.3 Naphthalene-1,4-dione (35)
4-Amino-1-naphthol hydrochloride 31 (67.6 mg, 0.35 mmol) was dissolved in trifluoroacetic acid (10 mL) and stirred at −20°C. Potassium nitrate (35.5 mg, 0.35 mmol) was added dropwise over 5 min. The mixture was then allowed to stir at −20°C for 30 min and then poured onto ice. Extraction with EtOAc, drying and chromatography (CH2Cl2 / EtOAc 3:2) gave 35 (41.4 mg, 75%) as a buff solid: Rf = 0.8 (CH2Cl2 / EtOAc 6:1); mp 124-126°C (lit.193 125-127°C); 1H NMR [(CD3)2SO] (COSY) δ 7.14 (2 H, s, 2,3-H2), 7.93 (2 H, m, 6,7-H2), 8.04 (2 H, m, 5,8-H2); 13C NMR [(CD3)2SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 125.83 (5,8-C2), 131.53 (4a,8a-C2), 134.18 (6,7-C2), 138.70 (2,3-C2), 184.80 (1,4-C2); MS (ES+ m/z 159.0446 (M + 1) (C10H7O2 requires 159.0446).

5.4 4-Amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-ol (40)
2,4-Dinitronaphthalen-1-ol 24 (5.04 g, 22 mmol) was stirred in conc. aq. HCl (20 mL) and EtOH (10 mL) for 1 h during the addition of SnCl2·2H2O (15.04 g, 66.64 mmol) in EtOH (20 mL), keeping the temperature < 30°C. The mixture was stirred for 17 h at 20°C. The suspension was filtered and the collected solid washed with EtOH / aq. conc. HCl (3:2). The yellow solid was partitioned between EtOAc and water and extracted several times with EtOAc. The organic layer was washed with brine and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (CH2Cl2) gave 40 (3.11 g, 71%) as a pale red solid: Rf = 0.5 (CH2Cl2); mp 160-161°C (lit.130 mp 160°C); IR νmax 3418, 3337 (OH, NH); 1H NMR (CDCl3) δ 3.98 (2 H, s, NH2), 7.26 (1 H, s, 3-H), 7.64 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.2, 7.0, 1.1 Hz, 7-H), 7.74 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.2, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 6-H), 7.83 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, 5-H), 8.53 (1 H, dd, J = 8.3, 0.6 Hz, 8-H), 11.92 (1 H, s, OH); 13C NMR (CDCl3) (HSQC / HMBC) δ 100.54 (3-C), 121.42 (5-C), 125.65 (8a-C), 125.92 (8-C), 127.15 (7-C), 127.90 (2-C), 129.56 (4a-C), 130.87 (6-C), 135.18 (4-C), 150.11 (1-C); MS (ES+) m/z 203.0466 (M - H) (C10H7N2O3 requires 203.0457).
5.5 4-Amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl \textit{tert}-butyl carbonate (41)

4-Amino-2-nitronaphthalene-1-ol 40 (53.8 mg, 0.26 mmol) was dissolved in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (10 mL) and stirred under N$_2$. Boc$_2$O (60.2 mg, 0.28 mmol) in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (5 mL) was added, followed by addition of DMAP (24.6 mg, 0.20 mmol) in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (2 mL); the mixture was stirred at 20°C for 30 min. The mixture was washed with water, brine and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (CH$_2$Cl$_2$) gave 41 (13.6 mg, 17%) as a yellow solid: $R_f$ = 0.4 (CH$_2$Cl$_2$); $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ 1.60 (9 H, s, Bu), 4.34 (2 H, s, NH$_2$), 7.29 (1 H, s, 3-H), 7.62-7.66 (2 H, m, 6,7-H$_2$), 7.79-7.82 (1 H, m, 5-H), 8.13-8.16 (1 H, m, 8-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 27.60 (CMe$_3$), 84.87 (CMe$_3$), 102.48 (3-C), 121.22 (5-C), 124.15 (8-C), 126.12 (4a-C), 128.14 (6-C), 128.20 (8a-C), 128.67 (7-C), 133.79 (4-C), 137.91 (2-C), 141.07 (1-C), 150.94 (C=O).

5.6 \textit{tert}-Butyl (4-hydroxy-3-nitronaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (42)

4-Amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-ol 40 (0.56 g, 2.7 mmol) was stirred in dry THF (20 mL) under N$_2$. Boc$_2$O (3.04 g, 14 mmol) in dry THF (5 mL) was added and the mixture was boiled under reflux for 20 h. The mixture was cooled and the solvent was evaporated. The residue was partitioned between CH$_2$Cl$_2$ and water and extracted with CH$_2$Cl$_2$, followed by washing with brine and drying. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 9:1) gave 42 (0.74 g, 89%) as an orange solid: $R_f$ = 0.4 (EtOAc / petroleum ether 1 : 4); mp 175-177°C; IR $\nu_{\max}$ 3338 (NH, OH), 3259 (NH, OH), 1687 (C=O), 1525 (NO$_2$); $^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (NOESY)] $\delta$ 1.55 (9 H, s, Bu$'$), 6.59 (1 H, br s, NH), 7.65 (1 H, ddd, $J$ = 8.2, 7.0, 1.1 Hz, 6-H), 7.77 (1 H, ddd, $J$ = 8.2, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 7-H), 7.87 (1 H, d, $J$ = 8.4 Hz, 8-H), 8.33 (1 H, s, 2-H), 8.56 (1 H, dd, $J$ = 8.4, 0.5 Hz, 5-H), 12.11 (1 H, s, OH); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 28.31 (CMe$_3$), 81.31 (CMe$_3$), 112.82 (2-C), 121.46 (8-C), 125.45 (8a-C), 125.83 (4-C), 125.91 (4a-C), 127.25 (6-C), 127.55 (3-C), 131.56 (7-C), 152.98 (1-C), 153.50 (C=O); MS (ES$^+$) $m/z$ 327.0966 (M + Na) (C$_{15}$H$_{16}$N$_2$NaO$_3$ requires 327.0957).
5.7 4-(tert-Butoxycarbonyl)amino-2-nitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (43)

Compound 42 (808 mg, 2.7 mmol), was stirred in dry pyridine (20 mL) under N₂ at 0°C for 15 min. Trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (0.70 mL, 1.2 g, 4.2 mmol) was added dropwise during 45 min and the mixture was stirred for 30 min at 0°C. The mixture was then allowed to warm to 20°C during 10 min. Water was added and the mixture extracted with EtOAc. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH₂Cl₂ → CH₂Cl₂ / EtOAc 1:1 → EtOAc) gave 43 (942 mg, 81%) as a yellow solid: R_f = 0.8 (CH₂Cl₂); mp 110-111°C; IR ν_max 3435 (NH), 1737 (C=O); ^1H NMR [(CDCl₃) (NOESY)] δ 1.59 (9 H, s, Bu'), 7.19 (1 H, s, NH), 7.78-7.82 (2 H, m, 6,7-C), 7.96 (1 H, dd, J = 6.5, 3.0 Hz, 5-H), 8.29 (1 H, dd, J = 6.5, 3.3 Hz, 8-H), 8.73 (1 H, s, 3-H); ^13C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.20 (CMe₃), 82.54 (CMe₃), 110.52 (3-C), 118.42 (q, J = 321.2 Hz, CF₃), 121.34 (5-C), 125.19 (8-C), 127.13 (8a-C), 127.51 (4a-C), 129.35 (6-C or 7-C), 130.12 (7-C or 6-C), 132.72 (2-C), 134.61 (4-C), 143.02 (1-C), 152.20 (C=O); ^19F NMR (CDCl₃) δ -72.55 (s, CF₃); MS (ES⁺) m/z 459.0484 (M + Na) (C₁₆H₁₅F₃N₂NaO₇ requires 459.0450).

5.8 Attempted nucleophilic displacement of the triflate group of 43 with iodide

Compound 43 (89.9 mg, 0.21 mmol) was stirred in DMF (20 mL) and NaI (63.1 mg, 0.46 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at 80°C overnight and then at 90°C for 2 h. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was suspended in water. Extraction with EtOAc, washing with sat. aq. Na₂S₂O₃, drying and evaporation gave 42 (50.2 mg, 80%) with properties as above.

5.9 Attempted reduction of the triflate group of 43

METHOD A

Compound 43 (41.9 mg, 96 µmol), magnesium (4.1 mg, 0.17 mmol) and Pd/C (10%, 4.5 mg) were placed in a flask and placed under Ar. Dry MeOH (10 mL) was introduced via a syringe and the reaction was stirred at 20°C for 16 h. Filtration through Celite®, evaporation and chromatography (CH₂Cl₂) gave 42 (13.1 mg, 45%) as an orange solid with properties as above.
METHOD B

Compound 43 (122 mg, 0.28 mmol) in DMF (5 mL) was treated with Ph₃P (3.66 mg, 14 µmol), palladium acetate (1.70 mg, 7.6 µmol), Et₃N (0.12 mL, 87 mg, 0.84 mmol) and formic acid (0.02 mL, 24 mg, 0.56 mmol). The mixture was stirred at 65°C for 16 h, diluted with water, extracted with EtOAc, dried and evaporated. Chromatography (CH₂Cl₂) gave 42 (66 mg, 78%) as an orange solid with properties as above.

5.10 (E)-tert-Butyl (3-amino-4-oxonaphthalen-1(4H)-ylidene)carbamate (50)

Compound 42 (66 mg, 0.22 mmol) was stirred vigorously with Pd/C (10%, 36.5 mg) in MeOH (20 mL) under H₂ for 1.5 h. The suspension was filtered through Celite® and the solvent was evaporated to give 50 (51 mg, 84%) as a dark brown solid: Rₚ = 0.3 (CH₂Cl₂); mp 155-156°C; IR νmax 3331 (NH), 1704 (C=O); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 1.61 (9 H, s, Bu'), 5.06 (2 H, s, NH₂), 6.10 (1 H, s, 2-H), 7.58 (1 H, t, J = 7.2 Hz, 6-H), 7.65 (1 H, t, J = 6.9 Hz, 7-H), 8.09 (1 H, d, J = 7.6 Hz, 5-H), 8.29 (1 H, d, J = 7.7 Hz, 8-H); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.23 (CMe₃), 82.26 (CMe₃), 99.01 (2-C), 125.78 (8-C), 126.33 (5-C), 130.41 (4a-C), 131.27 (6-C), 133.62 (7-C), 134.84 (8a-C), 144.84 (3-C), 157.13 (1-C), 162.94 (Boc C=O), 180.70 (4-C); MS (ES⁺) m/z 567.2262 (2 M + Na) (C₁₅H₁₆N₂NaO₃ requires 567.2220), 295.1052 (M + Na) (C₁₅H₁₆N₂NaO₃ requires 295.1059).

5.11 tert-Butyl N-(4-oxo-3-(2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalen-1-ylidene)-carbamate (52)

K₂CO₃ (178 mg 1.3 mmol) and sodium dithionite (198 mg, 1.1 mmol) in water (4 mL) were added dropwise to 42 (75 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (8 mL) and water (1 mL) under N₂. Stirring was continued for 16 h at 35°C. The mixture was dried and filtered. The filtrate was cooled to 0°C. Pr₂NEt (580 mg, 4.5 mmol) was added followed by dropwise addition of trifluoroacetic anhydride (315 mg, 1.5 mmol). The mixture was stirred at 0°C for 15 min then allowed to warm to 20°C. Stirring was continued for 2 h. The mixture was washed with water and brine and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 9:1) gave 52 (39 mg, 42%) as a yellow solid: Rₚ = 0.6 (petroleum ether / EtOAc 4:1); mp 122-123°C; IR νmax 3290, 3097 (NH), 1744 (C=O); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 1.66 (9 H, s, Bu'), 7.71 (1 H, ddd, J = 9.0, 7.7, 1.9 Hz, 6-H), 7.78 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.9, 7.4, 1.5 Hz, 7-H), 8.13 (1 H,
s, 2-H), 8.19 (1 H, dd, J = 7.7, 1.1, Hz, 5-H), 8.36 (1 H, dd, J = 7.8, 0.9 Hz, 8-H), 9.17 (1H, s, NH); 13C NMR [(CDCl3) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.13 (ClMe3), 84.22 (ClMe3), 114.57 (2-C), 114.72 (q, J = 288.4 Hz, CF3), 126.11 (8-C), 127.12 (5-C), 129.40 (4a-C), 132.45 (6-C), 133.67 (3-C), 134.80 (7-C), 135.00 (8a-C), 155.28 (Boc C=O), 155.57 (q, J = 39.2 Hz, CF3C=O), 161.36 (1-C), 178.63 (4-C); 19F NMR (CDCl3) δ -75.76 (s, CF3); MS (ES+) m/z 367.0941 (M - H) (C17H14F3N2O4 requires 367.0906).

5.12 2,4-Dinitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (53)

2,4-Dinitronaphthalen-1-ol 24 (501 mg, 2.14 mmol) and Et3N (562 mg, 5.6 mmol) in CH2Cl2 (10 mL) were cooled in an ice bath and treated dropwise with trifluoromethanesulfonyl anhydride (784 mg, 2.8 mmol). The mixture was stirred at 20°C for 2 h under N2. Aq. HCl (0.5 M, 10 mL) was added in one portion and the mixture was stirred for 30 min. The aqueous phase was separated and extracted with CH2Cl2. The combined organic phases were washed with sat. aq. NaHCO3 and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH2Cl2) gave 53 (484 mg, 62%) as a yellow solid: Rf = 0.9 (CH2Cl2); mp 117-119°C (lit.79 mp 105-107°C); IR νmax 1532 (NO2), 1365 (SO2-O-), 1349 (NO2); 1H NMR [(CD3)2SO] δ 7.72 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.2, 7.1, 1.0 Hz, 7-H), 7.91 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.4, 7.0, 1.4 Hz, 6-H), 8.51 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, 8-H), 8.57 (1 H, d, J = 8.6 Hz, 5-H), 8.87 (1 H, s, 3-H); 13C NMR [(CD3)2SO] (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 120.65 (q, J = 322.3 Hz, CF3), 122.31 (3-C), 123.32 (5-C), 125.58 (8-C), 127.49 (2-C), 127.76 (8a-C, 7-C), 128.00 (4a-C), 133.09 (6-C), 134.75 (4-C), 158.70 (1-C); 19F NMR (CDCl3) δ -71.85 (s, CF3).

5.13 1-Iodo-2,4-dinitronaphthalene (54)

2,4-Dinitronaphthalen-1-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate 53 (4.28 g, 11.7 mmol) was heated under reflux with NaI (5.99 g, 40 mmol) in acetone (170 mL) for 2 h. The evaporation residue, in EtOAc, was washed with sat. aq. Na2S2O3 and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (CH2Cl2) gave 54 (2.98 g, 74%) as yellow solid: Rf = 0.8 (CH2Cl2 / petroleum ether 1:1); mp 183-186°C (lit.79 mp 194-195°C); IR νmax 1530 (NO2), 1333(NO2); 1H NMR [(CD3)2SO] δ 7.98 (2 H, m, 6-H, 7-H), 8.32 (1 H, dd, J = 7.1, 1.7 Hz, 5-H), 8.52 (1 H, dd, J = 7.7, 2.0 Hz, 8-H), 8.73 (1 H, s, 3-H); 13C NMR [(CD3)2SO] (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 102.55 (1-C), 117.53 (3-C), 123.35 (5-C), 124.01 (4a-C), 131.39 (6-C), 132.32 (7-C), 135.07 (8-C), 135.12 (8a-C), 147.21 (4-C), 151.91 (2-C).
5.14 Naphthalene-1,3-diamine (58)
1,3-Dinitronaphthalene 57 (44.1 mg, 0.20 mmol) was stirred in THF (10 mL) and 10 % Pd-C (10 mg) added. The mixture was stirred under H2 for 16 h. The mixture was filtered through Celite® and the solvent evaporated to give 58 (32 mg, 100%) as a dark solid: Rf = 0.3 (EtOAc / CH2Cl2 1:4); 1H NMR (CDCl3) δ 3.71 (2 H, s, NH2), 4.08 (2 H, s, NH2), 6.23 (1 H, d, J = 2.1 Hz, 2-H), 6.50 (1 H, d, J = 1.9 Hz, 4-H), 7.18 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.2, 6.8, 1.2 Hz, 7-H), 7.34 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.0, 6.8, 1.0 Hz, 6-H), 7.53 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, 5-H), 7.64 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, 8-H); 13C NMR [(CDCl3) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 100.67 (4-C), 100.58 (2-C), 118.65 (8a-C), 120.67 (8-C), 121.36 (7-C), 126.39 (5-C or 6-C), 126.42 (6-C or 5-C), 136.01 (4a-C), 143.28 (1-C), 144.71 (3-C).

5.15 N,N’-Bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)naphthalene-1,3-diamine (59)
1-Iodo-2,4-dinitronaphthalene 54 (1.05 g, 2.9 mmol) and SnCl2.2H2O (9.84 g, 44 mmol) in EtOAc (100 mL) were heated under reflux for 17 h. The mixture was added to ice and NaHCO3 was added until the aqueous layer was basic. The mixture was extracted with EtOAc, washed with water and dried. Evaporation gave crude naphthalene-1,3-diamine 58. This material was boiled under reflux with Boc2O (3.11 g, 14.2 mmol) in THF (30 mL) for 17 h. Evaporation and chromatography (CH2Cl2) gave 59 (769 mg, 74%) as a pale buff solid: Rf = 0.7 (CH2Cl2); mp 127-130°C (lit.79 mp 129-131°C); IR νmax 3254 (NH), 1716 (C=O), 1685 (C=O); 1H NMR [(CDCl3) (NOESY)] δ 1.54 (9 H, s, Bu’t), 1.56 (9 H, s, Bu’t), 6.63 (1 H, s, NH), 6.91 (1 H, s, NH), 7.34 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.1, 6.8, 1.3 Hz, 7-H), 7.44 (1 H, ddd, J = 7.9, 6.9, 1.1 Hz, 6-H), 7.73 (1 H, d, J = 8.2, 8-H), 7.77 (2 H, m, 4.5-H2), 7.93 (1 H, s, 2-H); 13C NMR [(CDCl3) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.37 (2 × CMe3), 80.63 (CMe3), 80.92 (CMe3), 110.65 (2-C, 5-C), 119.69 (8-C), 122.5 (8a-C), 124.41 (7-C), 126.49 (6-C), 128.52 (4-C), 133.76 (1-C), 134.82 (5a-C), 135.81 (3-C), 152.76 (C=O), 153.13 (C=O).

5.16 N,N’-Bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25)
Compound 59 (417 mg, 1.28 mmol) was treated with N-iodosuccinimide (431 mg, 1.9 mmol) and TsOH.H2O (457 mg, 2.4 mmol) in THF / MeOH (14 mL, 1:1) at −78°C. The mixture was allowed to slowly warm to 20°C over 4 h and was then diluted with aq. Na2S2O3 (5%) and stirred at 20°C for 15 min. The mixture was extracted with EtOAc. The
combined organic extracts were dried and the solvents were evaporated. Chromatography (CH$_2$Cl$_2$) gave 25 (400 mg, 71%) as a pale buff solid: R$_f$ = 0.4 (CH$_2$Cl$_2$); mp 166-168°C (lit. 79 mp 154-156°C); IR $\nu_{\text{max}}$ 3384 (NH), 3229 (NH), 1733 (C=O), 1683 (C=O); $^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$)] $\delta$ 1.55 (9 H, s, Bu'), 1.57 (9 H, s, Bu'), 6.86 (1 H, s, 4-NH), 7.17 (1 H, s, 2-NH), 7.43 (1 H, dd, J = 6.9, 1.1 Hz, 6-H), 7.51 (1 H, dd, J = 6.8, 1.1 Hz, 7-H), 7.76 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, 5-H), 8.09 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, 8-H), 8.62 (1 H, s, 3-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 28.38 (2 × CMe$_3$), 81.03 (CMe$_3$), 81.28 (CMe$_3$), 87.36 (1-C), 113.71 (3-C), 121.40 (5-C), 124.88 (4a-C), 125.32 (6-C), 128.15 (7-C), 132.58 (8-C), 134.65 (4-C or 8a-C), 134.82 (8a-C or 4-C), 138.22 (2-C), 152.68 (C=O), 153.21 (C=O).

5.17 Selective de-iodination of N,N’-Bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25)

Compound 25 (51.9 mg, 0.11 mmol) in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (10 mL) was stirred with CF$_3$CO$_2$H in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (1.0 mL, 8.5µL mL$^{-1}$, 0.11 mmol). The mixture was stirred for 7 d. Additional CF$_3$CO$_2$H in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (1.0 mL, 8.5µL mL$^{-1}$, 0.11 mmol) was added at 48 h, 72 h, 96 h and 120 h. The mixture was diluted with water and extracted with CH$_2$Cl$_2$. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH$_2$Cl$_2$) gave 59 (28.2 mg, 72%) as a pale buff solid with properties as above.

5.18 tert-Butyl N-(1-aminonaphthalen-3-yl)carbamate (62)

Compound 25 (287 mg, 0.56 mmol) was stirred with HCl in dioxane (4.0 M, 10 mL) for 45 min. The solid was collected by filtration, washed with HCl in dioxane (4.0 M) and dried to give a brown solid (157 mg). This material (54 mg) was suspended in dry THF (2 mL) and stirred under N$_2$. Pr$_3$NEt (0.10 mL, 77 mg, 0.60 mmol) was added, followed by dropwise addition of Boc$_2$O (34 mg, 0.16 mmol) in dry THF (1.0 mL) during 15 min. The reaction was stirred under N$_2$ for 10 d. Water was added and the mixture was concentrated under reduced pressure. The mixture was extracted with EtOAc. The extract was washed with water and sat. aq. Na$_2$S$_2$O$_3$. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH$_2$Cl$_2$ / EtOAc 9:1) gave 62 (8.1 mg, 6%) as a yellow solid: $^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (NOESY)] $\delta$ 1.54 (9 H, s, Bu'), 6.57 (1 H, s, NH), 6.90 (1 H, s, 2-H), 7.29 (1 H, s, 4-H), 7.32 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.2, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 7-H), 7.40 (1 H, ddd, J = 7.9, 6.9, 1.0 Hz, 6-H), 7.68 (1 H, d, J = 8.1 Hz, 5-H), 7.71 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, 8-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 28.35 (CMe$_3$), 80.52 (CMe$_3$), 102.52 (2-C), 152.68 (C=O), 153.21 (C=O).
105.75 (4-C), 120.50 (8a-C), 120.58 (8-C), 122.39 (7-C), 126.48 (6-C), 127.88 (5-C), 134.94 (4a-C), 136.41 (3-C), 142.81 (1-C), 152.78 (C=O); MS (ES\(^+\)) m/z 281.1269 (M + Na) (C\(_{13}\)H\(_{18}\)N\(_{2}\)NaO\(_{2}\) requires 281.1266), 259.1443 (M + H) (C\(_{13}\)H\(_{19}\)N\(_{2}\)O\(_{2}\) requires 259.1447).

5.19 1,3-Bis(trifluoroacetamido)naphthalene (63)

Compound 58 (32.0 mg, 0.20 mmol) was stirred in dry THF (2 mL) under N\(_2\) at 0°C. Pr\(_2\)NEt (0.14 mL, 104 mg, 0.81 mmol) was added followed by dropwise addition of trifluoroacetic anhydride (0.03 mL, 45.3 mg, 0.20 mmol) during 30 min. The reaction was stirred at 0°C and allowed to warm slowly to 20°C over 16 h. Water was added to the reaction and the solvent was evaporated. The residue was dissolved in EtOAc. This solution was washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) / EtOAc 19:1) gave 63 (19 mg, 26%) as a yellow solid: R\(_f\) 0.8 (CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) / EtOAc 4:1); mp 214-216°C; IR \(\nu_{max}\) 3345, 3258 (NH), 1716 (C=O); \(^{1}\)H NMR [(CD\(_3\))\(_2\)SO] (NOESY) \(\delta\) 7.66 (2 H, m, 6,7-H\(_2\)), 7.91 (2 H, m, 2,8-H\(_2\)), 8.06 (1 H, m, 5-H), 8.40 (1 H, d, \(J = 1.8\) Hz, 4-H), 11.62 (2 H, s, NH); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(CD\(_3\))\(_2\)SO] (HSQC / HMBC) \(\delta\) 115.73 (q, \(J = 288.7\) Hz, CF\(_3\)), 116.12 (q, \(J = 288.7\) Hz, CF\(_3\)), 118.18 (4-C), 118.73 (2-C), 122.41 (8-C), 126.33 (8a-C), 126.46 6-C or 7-C), 127.39 (7-C or 6-C), 128.28 (5-C), 131.40 (4a-C), 133.39 (3-C), 133.59 (1-C), 154.82 (q, \(J = 37.1\) Hz, C=O), 156.03 (q, \(J = 36.7\) Hz, C=O); \(^{19}\)F NMR [(CD\(_3\))\(_2\)SO] \(\delta\) -73.85 (3 F, s, CF\(_3\)), -73.72 (3 F, s, CF\(_3\))]; MS (ES\(^+\)) m/z 349.0442 (M - H) (C\(_{14}\)H\(_{7}\)F\(_{6}\)N\(_{2}\)O\(_{2}\) requires 349.0412).

5.20 N-(1-aminonaphthalen-3-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (65)

Compound 58 (1.29 g, 8.16 mmol) was stirred in dry THF (100 mL) under N\(_2\) at 0°C. Pr\(_2\)NEt (5.70 mL, 4.23 g, 32.6 mmol) was added followed by dropwise addition of trifluoroacetic anhydride (1.13 mL, 1.71 g, 8.16 mmol) in dry THF (100 mL) during 2 h. The mixture was allowed to slowly warm to 20°C during 16 h. The solvent was evaporated and the residue dissolved in EtOAc. This solution was washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 9:1 → 1:1) gave 65 (309 mg, 15%) as a buff solid: R\(_f\) = 0.5 (CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) / EtOAc 4:1); mp 168-169°C; IR \(\nu_{max}\) 3482, 3374, 3324 (NH), 1721, 1706 (C=O); \(^{1}\)H NMR [(CD\(_3\))\(_2\)SO] \(\delta\) 5.99 (2 H, s, NH\(_2\)), 7.01 (1 H, d, \(J = 2.0\) Hz, 2-H), 7.39 (1 H, ddd, \(J = 8.2, 6.8, 1.3\) Hz, 7-H), 7.47 (1 H, ddd, \(J = 8.1, 6.8, 1.2\) Hz, 6-H), 7.49 (1 H, d, \(J = 1.4\) Hz, 4-H), 7.75 (1 H, d, \(J = 7.7\) Hz, 5-H), 8.10 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.4\) Hz, 1-H).
Hz, 8-H), 11.17 (1 H, s, NH); $^{13}$C NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 101.31 (2-C), 106.51 (4-C), 115.88 (q, $J = 289.0$ Hz, CF$_3$), 120.89 (8a-C), 122.24 (8-C), 123.46 (7-C), 126.34 (6-C), 127.78 (5-C), 134.09 (4a-C), 134.67 (3-C), 145.56 (1-C), 154.41 (q, $J = 36.6$ Hz, C=O); $^{19}$F NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO] δ -73.69 (s, CF$_3$); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 277.0554 (M + Na) (C$_{12}$H$_6$F$_3$N$_2$NaO requires 277.0565).

### 5.21 tert-Butyl N-(3-trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (66)

Compound 65 (330 mg, 1.30 mmol) was boiled under reflux with Boc$_2$O (1.43 g, 6.55 mmol) in dry THF (10 mL) under N$_2$ for 16 h. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether → petroleum ether / EtOAc 19:1) gave 66 (381 mg, 83%) as a pale buff solid. $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum ether / EtOAc 4:1); mp 206-208°C; IR $\nu_{\text{max}}$ 3297 (NH), 3244 (NH), 1711 (C=O), 1683 (C=O); $^1$H NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO) (NOESY)] δ 1.57 (9 H, s, Bu$_3$), 7.54 (1 H, td, $J = 6.8, 1.4$ Hz, 7-H), 7.58 (1 H, td, $J = 6.8, 1.2$ Hz, 6-H), 7.94 (1 H, d, $J = 8.1$ Hz, 5-H), 8.00 (1 H, d, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 2-H), 8.13 (1 H, d, $J = 8.2$ Hz, 8-H), 8.20 (1 H, d, $J = 1.8$ Hz, 4-H), 9.39 (1 H, s, NBoc), 11.50 (1 H, s, NHCOCF$_3$); $^{13}$C NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.13 (CM$_{Me_3}$), 79.26 (CM$_{Me_3}$), 114.63 (2-C), 114.73 (4-C), 115.79 (q, $J = 288.8$ Hz, CF$_3$), 122.64 (8-C), 125.27 (8a-C), 125.33 (7-C), 126.75 (6-C), 128.03 (5-C), 133.52 (4-C), 133.56 (3-C), 134.92 (1-C), 153.76 (Boc C=O), 154.68 (q, $J = 37.1$ Hz, CF$_3$C=O); $^{19}$F NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO] δ -73.76 (s, CF$_3$); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 377.1120 (M + Na) (C$_{17}$H$_{17}$F$_3$N$_2$NaO$_3$ requires 377.1089).

### 5.22 tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(trifluoroacetamidonaphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (67)

Compound 66 (336 mg, 0.95 mmol) in dry THF (10 mL) was cooled to −78°C and stirred under N$_2$. NIS (309 mg, 1.4 mmol) in dry THF (2.0 mL) was added followed by TsOH.H$_2$O (370 mg, 1.9 mmol) in dry THF (2.0 mL). The temperature of the mixture was allowed to rise slowly to 20°C over 20 h. The reaction was quenched by addition of sat. aq. NaHCO$_3$. The mixture was diluted with water and extracted with EtOAc. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether → petroleum ether / EtOAc 4:1) gave 67 (344 mg, 75%) as a pale buff solid: $R_f = 0.6$ (CH$_2$Cl$_2$); mp 198-199°C; IR $\nu_{\text{max}}$ 3323, 3209 (NH), 1721 (C=O), 1698 (C=O); $^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (NOESY)] δ 1.57 (9 H, s, Bu$_3$), 6.95 (1 H, s, Boc NH), 7.54-7.61 (2 H, m, 6.7-H$_2$), 7.82 (1 H, d, $J = 8.1$ Hz, 5-H), 8.14 (1 H, d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 8-H), 8.58 (1 H, s, NHCOCF$_3$), 8.71 (1 H, s, 3-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.31 (CM$_{Me_3}$),
81.63 (CMe₃), 89.87 (1-C), 113.26 (3-C), 115.77 (q, J = 289.3 Hz, CF₃), 121.09 (5-C), 125.43 (4a-C), 126.86 (6-C), 128.73 (7-C), 133.17 (8-C), 134.52 (8a-C), 134.90 (4-C), 135.20 (2-C), 152.82 (Boc C=O), 155.05 (q, J = 38.0 Hz, CF₃C=O); 

19F NMR (CDCl₃) δ -74.13 (s, CF₃C=O); 

MS (ES⁺) m/z 503.0100 (M + Na) (C₁₇H₁₆F₃IN₂NaO₃ requires 503.0055), 498.0542 (M + NH₄⁺) (C₁₇H₂₀F₃IN₃O₃ requires 498.0500).

5.23 Wheland-like intermediates in the de-iodination of N,N’-Bis(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diamine (25) in acidic media

To compound 25 (14.7 mg, 28 µmol) was added a mixture of CDCl₃ (0.15 mL) and CF₃CO₂H (0.45 mL) at 0°C. The sample was transferred to an NMR spectrometer, with the probe pre-cooled to 0°C. The mixture was kept at 0°C for 2 h to give 68. The mixture was allowed to slowly warm to 20°C and kept at this temperature for 2 h to give 69.

5.23.1 1-Iodonaphthalene-2,4-diammonium (68)

1H NMR (CF₃CO₂H / CDCl₃ 3:1) δ 7.95 (1 H, t, J = 8.5 Hz, 6-H), 7.98 (1 H, t, J = 7.0 Hz, 7-H), 8.05 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, 5-H), 8.11 (1 H, s, 3-H), 8.48 (1 H, d, J = 8.5 Hz, 8-H); 

13C NMR [(CF₃CO₂H / CDCl₃ 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 101.74 (1-C), 116.88 (3-C), 120.91 (5-C), 126.58 (4a-C), 127.73 (4-C), 129.30 (2-C), 131.75 (6-C), 132.30 (7-C), 134.69 (8-C), 135.92 (8a-C).

5.23.2 2-Imino-1-iodo-1,2-dihydronaphthalen-4-ammonium (69)

1H NMR (CF₃CO₂H / CDCl₃ 3:1) δ 6.05 (1 H, s, 3-H), 6.51 (1 H, s, 1-H), 7.58 (1 H, t, J = 7.4 Hz, 6-H), 7.70 (1 H, t, J = 7.4 Hz, 7-H), 7.75 (1 H, d, J = 7.8 Hz, 8-H), 7.84 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, 5-H); 

13C NMR [(CF₃CO₂H / CDCl₃ 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 9.76 (1-C), 91.48 (3-C), 121.68 (4a-C), 124.18 (5-C), 129.94 (6-C), 131.47 (8-C), 134.99 (7-C), 141.24 (8a-C), 164.01 (4-C), 173.43 (2-C).

The above reaction was repeated using CF₃CO₂D to investigate the source of proton in the Wheland-like intermediate 69. To compound 25 (14.7 mg, 28 µmol) was added a mixture of CDCl₃ (0.15 mL) and CF₃CO₂D (0.45 mL) at 0°C. The sample was transferred to an NMR spectrometer, with the probe pre-cooled to 0°C. The mixture was kept at 0°C for 2 h to give 70. The mixture was allowed to slowly warm to 20°C and kept at this temperature for 2 h to
give 71. An attempt to undertake mass spectrometry on sample 71 resulted in the identification of 72.

5.23.3 Deuterated 1-iodonaphthalene-2,4-diammonium (70)

1H NMR (CF3CO2D / CDCl3 3:1) δ 7.95 (1 H, t, J = 8.5 Hz, 6-H), 7.98 (1 H, t, J = 7.0 Hz, 7-H), 8.05 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, 5-H), 8.11 (0.3 H / 0.7 D, s, 3-H), 8.48 (1 H, d, J = 8.5 Hz, 8-H); 13C NMR [(CF3CO2D / CDCl3 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 101.62 (1-C), 116.88 (3-C), 120.95 (5-C), 126.66 (4a-C), 127.75 (4-C), 129.38 (2-C), 131.78 (6-C), 132.29 (7-C), 134.73 (8-C), 136.03 (8a-C).

5.23.4 Deuterated 2-imino-1-iodo-1,2-dihydronaphthalene-4-ammonium (71)

1H NMR (CF3CO2D / CDCl3 3:1) δ 6.06 (0.07 H / 0.93 D, s, 3-H), 6.50 (0.2 H / 0.8 D, s, 1-H), 7.59 (1 H, t, J = 7.8 Hz, 6-H), 7.70 (1 H, t, J = 7.5 Hz, 7-H), 7.76 (1 H, d, J = 7.8 Hz, 8-H), 7.84 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, 5-H); 13C NMR [(CF3CO2D / CDCl3 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 9.55 (t, J = 22.9 Hz, 1-C), 90.64 (m, 3-C), 121.66 (4a-C), 124.19 (5-C), 129.98 (6-C), 131.48 (8-C), 135.02 (7-C), 141.18 (8a-C), 163.75 (4-C), 173.09 (2-C).

5.23.5 Deuterated naphthalene-1,3-diamine (72)

MS (ES+) m/z 159.0921 (32.8%) (M + H) (C10H11N2 requires 159.0922), 160.0991 (M + H) (86.1%) (C10H10DN2 requires 160.0985), 161.1054 (M + H) (100%) (C10H9D2N2 requires 161.1048), 162.1114 (M + 1) (55%) (C10H8D3N2 requires 162.1111).

5.24 Wheland-like intermediates from naphthalene-1,3-diamine in acidic media

To naphthalene-1,3-diamine 58 (14.7 mg, 67 µmol) was added a mixture of CDCl3 (0.15 mL) and CF3CO2H (0.45 mL) at 0°C. The sample was transferred to an NMR spectrometer, with the probe pre-cooled to 0°C. The mixture was kept at 0°C for 20 min to give 73. The reaction was then allowed to slowly rise from 0°C → 20°C and kept at 20°C for 2 d to give 74.
5.24.1 Naphthalene-1,3-diammonium (73)

\(^1\)H NMR (CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)H / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) \(\delta\) 7.87 (1 H, t, \(J = 8.8\) Hz, 6-H), 7.91 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.7\) Hz, 7-H), 7.98 (1 H, d, \(J = 2.0\) Hz, 2-H), 8.04 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.1\) Hz, 8-H), 8.10 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.8\) Hz, 5-H), 8.21 (1 H, d, \(J = 1.6\) Hz, 4-H); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)H / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] \(\delta\) 116.65 (2-C), 119.99 (8-C), 125.51 (3-C), 125.96 (4-C), 126.64 (8a-C), 127.33 (1-C), 129.90 (5-C), 130.56 (6-C), 131.20 (7-C), 134.27 (4a-C).

5.24.2 3-Imino-3,4-dihydronaphthalen-1-ammonium (74)

\(^1\)H NMR (CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)H / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) \(\delta\) 4.13 (2 H, s, 4-H), 6.02 (1 H, s, 2-H), 7.51 (1 H, d, \(J = 7.8\) Hz, 5-H), 7.57 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.7\) Hz, 7-H), 7.71 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.6\) Hz, 6-H), 7.82 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.1\) Hz, 8-H); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)H / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] \(\delta\) 33.28 (4-C), 93.53 (2-C), 123.03 (8a-C), 123.15 (8-C), 128.83 (7-C), 129.27 (5-C), 134.33 (6-C), 136.63 (4a-C), 165.70 (1-C), 171.90 (3-C).

The above procedure was repeated using CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)D. To naphthalene-1,3-diamine 58 (14.7 mg, 67 \(\mu\)mol) was added a mixture of CDCl\(_3\) (0.15 mL) and CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)D (0.45 mL) at 20°C for 6 d to give a mixture of 75 and 76. NMR showed deuterium exchange at 2-C and 4-C.

5.24.3 Deuterated naphthalene-1,3-diammonium (75)

\(^1\)H NMR (CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)D / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) \(\delta\) 7.90 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.0\) Hz, 6-H), 7.94 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.0\) Hz, 7-H), 8.05 (0.2 H / 0.8 D, s, 2-H/D), 8.10 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.3\) Hz, 8-H), 8.14 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.0\) Hz, 5-H), 8.28 (0.2 H / 0.8 D, s, 4-H/D); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)D / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] \(\delta\) 116.63 (2-C), 120.07 (8-C), 125.17-125.31 (3-C), 125.75 (brt, 4-CD), 126.04 (4-CH), 126.74 (8a-C), 127.11-127.18 (1-C), 129.90-129.95 (5-C), 130.59 (6-C), 131.27 (7-C), 134.30, 134.35 (4a-C).

5.24.4 Deuterated 3-imino-3,4-dihydronaphthalen-1-ammonium (76)

\(^1\)H NMR (CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)D / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) \(\delta\) 4.11 (0.4 H / 1.6 D, s, 4-CHD), 6.04 (0.25 H / 0.75 D, s, 2-H/D), 7.55 (1 H, d, \(J = 7.8\) Hz, 5-H), 7.61 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.8\) Hz, 7-H), 7.74 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.6\) Hz, 6-H), 7.87 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.2\) Hz, 8-H); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)D / CDCl\(_3\) 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] \(\delta\)
32.74 (sextet, $J = 20.0$ Hz, 4-C), 92.98 (t, $J = 24.5$ Hz, 2-CD), 93.21 (t, $J = 24.5$ Hz, 2-CH), 123.04 (8a-C), 123.21 (8-C), 128.84 (7-C), 129.29 (5-C), 134.42 (6-C), 136.66 (m, 4a-C), 165.72 (1-C), 171.84 (3-C).

5.25 De-iodination of tert-butyl (4-iodo-3-(2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalen-1-yl)carbamate (67) in acidic media

To compound 67 (16.2 mg, 34 µmol) was added a mixture of CDCl$_3$ (0.15 mL) and CF$_3$CO$_2$H (0.45 mL) at 0°C. The sample was transferred to an NMR spectrometer, with the probe pre-cooled to 0°C. The mixture was kept at 0°C for 2 h to give 77.

5.25.1 N-(4-Ammonium-1-iodonaphthalen-2-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (77)

$^1$H NMR (CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ 7.84 (1 H, t, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 6-H), 7.88 (1 H, t, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 7-H), 7.97 (1 H, d, $J = 8.2$ Hz, 5-H), 8.44 (1 H, d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 8-H), 8.57 (1 H, s, 3-H), 9.24 (1 H, s, NH); $^{13}$C NMR [(CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 99.94 (1-C), 116.71 (3-C), 120.59 (5-C), 125.47 (4a-C), 126.84 (4-C), 130.40 (6-C), 131.41 (7-C), 133.68 (2-C), 134.58 (8-C), 135.78 (8a-C), 158.21 (q, $J = 39.5$ Hz, CF$_3$C=O).

The above procedure was repeated with CF$_3$CO$_2$D to give 79 at 0°C. The temperature of the reaction was allowed to rise from 0°C $\rightarrow$ 20°C and kept at 20°C for 7 d to give 80 with deuterium exchange at 2-C and 4-C.

5.25.2 Deuterated N-(4-ammonium-1-iodonaphthalen-2-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (79)

$^1$H NMR (CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) $\delta$ 7.84 (1 H, t, $J = 7.3$ Hz, 6-H), 7.88 (1 H, t, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 7-H), 7.96 (1 H, d, $J = 8.2$ Hz, 5-H), 8.44 (1 H, d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 8-H), 8.59 (1 H, s, 3-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 99.79 (1-C), 116.64 (3-C), 120.56 (5-C), 125.41 (4a-C), 126.49 (4-C), 130.39 (6-C), 131.42 (7-C), 133.64 (2-C), 134.58 (8-C), 135.79 (8a-C).
5.25.3 Deuterated N-(1-ammoniumnaphthalen-3-yl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamide (80)

$^1$H NMR (CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) δ 7.76-7.80 (2 H, m, 6,7-H), 7.95 (1 H, m, 8-H), 8.04 (1 H, m, 5-H), 8.20 (0.2 H / 0.8 D, s 2-H), 8.29 (0.1 H / 0.9 D, s, 4-H), 9.31 (0.05 H / 0.95 D, s, NH); $^{13}$C NMR [(CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 116.48 (brt, 2-C), 119.63 (8-C), 122.32-122.90 (brt, 4-C), 125.15 (8a-C), 125.91 (1-C), 129.74 (6-C), 129.79 (5-C), 129.80 (7-C), 131.42 (3-C), 134.81 (4a-C), 157.58 (q, J = 39.1 Hz, CF$_3$C=O).

5.26 Entrapment of tert-butyl cation by trifluoroacetic acid

In each case where deprotection of Boc occurred in the NMR experiments described above, NMR showed that the Bu’ group of 25 and 67 was trapped by the acid to give Bu’ trifluoroacetate 81. When CF$_3$CO$_2$D was used, it was observed that incorporation of deuterium in Bu’ occurred to give 82.

5.26.1 tert-Butyl 2,2,2-trifluoroacetate (81)

$^1$H NMR (CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) δ 1.63 (9 H, s, Bu’); $^{13}$C NMR [(CF$_3$CO$_2$H / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) (HSQC)] δ 27.02 (CMe$_3$), 90.67 (CMe$_3$), 159.45 (q, J = 41.9 Hz, C=O).

5.26.2 Deuterated tert-butyl 2,2,2-trifluoroacetate (82)

$^1$H NMR (CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) δ 1.61 (CH$_2$D), 1.63 (CH$_3$); $^{13}$C NMR [(CF$_3$CO$_2$D / CDCl$_3$ 3:1) (HSQC)] δ 26.76 (tt, J = 19.9, 3.5 Hz, CH$_2$D), 27.03 (t, J = 3.5 Hz, CH$_3$), 90.64 (t, J = 5.4 Hz, CCH$_3$(CH$_2$D)$_2$), 159.53 (q, J = 42.0 Hz, C=O).

5.27 (2R,3R)-3-Methyloxiran-2-yl)methanol (90)

Dry CH$_3$Cl$_2$ (200 mL) was stirred at −23°C under N$_2$. To this was added titanium tetraisopropoxide (5.94 mL, 5.68 g, 20 mmol) and (−)-diethyl D-tartrate (3.42 mL, 4.12 g, 20 mmol). The mixture was stirred for 5 min and buten-2-ol 89 (1.7 mL, 1.44 g, 20 mmol) and anhydrous tert-butyl hydroperoxide (7.3 mL, 5.5 M in decane, 40 mmol) were added. The mixture was kept at −20°C for 20 h. To this cold mixture was added Et$_2$O (200 mL) and the mixture was stirred until a homogeneous solution was obtained. Sat. aq. Na$_2$SO$_4$ (6 mL) was added with vigorous stirring. The resulting slurry was filtered through
Celite® and the solvent was evaporated from the filtrate at 20°C. Chromatography (Et₂O / petroleum ether 1:1 → 4:1) gave 90 (872 mg, 50%) as a colourless oil: Rₖ = 0.5 (Et₂O / petroleum ether 1:4); IR ν max 3412 (OH), 3020 (ring CH), 1255 (C=O). 

1H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 1.20 (3 H, d, J = 5.2 Hz, Me), 2.76 (1 H, dt, J = 5.0, 2.6 Hz, 2-H), 2.89 (1 H, dq, J = 10.5, 2.3 Hz, 3-H), 3.21 (1 H, br, OH), 3.45 (1 H, dd, J = 12.5, 4.7 Hz, 1-H), 3.72 (1 H, dd, J = 12.5, 2.1 Hz, 1-H).

5.28 2R,3S (3-Methyloxiran-2-yl)methyl 4-nitrobenzenesulfonate (91)

4-Nitrobenzene-1-sulfonyl chloride (903 mg, 4.1 mmol) was added portionwise to a stirred solution of 90 (367 mg, 4.2 mmol) and Et₃N (0.6 mL, 436 mg, 4.3 mmol) in toluene (10 mL) at 0°C. Stirring was continued for 30 min at 20°C and then the mixture was filtered through Celite®. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was purified by column chromatography (petroleum ether / Et₂O 1:1) to give 91 (688 mg, 61%) as a mixture of diastereoisomers. This was dissolved in Et₂O (60 mL) and after removal of about 50% solvent, the white precipitate (the racemate) was filtered off and the solvent was evaporated from the mother liquor. Two crystallisation from Et₂O afforded 91 (121.6 mg, 11%) as a white solid: Rₖ = 0.6 (petroleum ether / Et₂O 1:1); mp 65-66°C (lit. 65-65.5°C); [α]D +26.9° (c = 0.41%, CHCl₃, 67.7% ee), (lit. [α]D +39.68° (c = 0.8, CHCl₃, 99.8% ee); 

1H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 1.31 (3 H, d, J = 5.2 Hz, Me), 2.88-2.95 (2 H, m, 2 × CH), 4.05 (1 H, dd, J = 11.4 , 6.2 Hz, SOCH), 4.40 (1 H, dd, J = 11.4, 3.2 Hz, SOCH), 8.11 (2 H, d, J = 8.7 Hz, Ar 2,6-H₂), 8.40 (2 H, d, J = 8.7 Hz, Ar 3,5-H₂); 

13C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 16.84 (Me), 52.60 (CH), 55.23 (CH), 71.23 (CH₂), 124.40 (Ar 3,5-C₂), 129.22 (Ar 2,6-C₂), 141.66 (Ar 1-C), 150.82 (Ar 4-C); MS (ES⁺) m/z 296.0213 (M + Na) (C₁₀H₁₁NNaO₆S requires 296.0205).

5.29 (S)-Oxiran-2-ylmethyl 4-nitrobenzenesulfonate (93)

Et₃N (2.3 mL, 1.67 g, 16 mmol) was stirred with R-oxiranylmethanol 92 (0.90 mL, 1.00 g, 14 mmol) in toluene at 0°C. This was followed by portionwise addition of 4-nitrobenzenesulfonyl chloride (3.16 g, 14 mmol). The mixture was then stirred at 20°C for 30 min. The suspension was filtered through Celite®. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂. This solution was washed with aq.
H₂SO₄ (2%), sat. aq. NaHCO₃ and brine. Drying and evaporation gave a pale yellow solid. The solid was dissolved in dry toluene (20 mL) and the resulting suspension warmed to ~55°C. Hexane was added dropwise till the solution turned cloudy. The resulting solution was cooled to 20°C overnight and then cooled to 0°C for 2 h with stirring. The suspension was filtered through sintered funnel and the precipitate was washed with hexane. Drying gave 93 (1.69 g, 40%) as a white solid: Rᵣ = 0.7 (Et₂O); mp 82-83°C (lit. mp 84-86°C); [α]ᵣ^18_d + 33.3° (c = 0.65%, CHCl₃, 99% ee), (lit. [α]ᵣ^25_d + 26.5° (c = 2.45, CHCl₃, 82% ee); IR νₘ₃ 3107, 3074 (ring CH); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 2.60 (1 H, dd, J = 4.7, 2.5 Hz, ₃-H), 2.83 (1 H, t, J = 4.4 Hz, ₃-H), 3.20 (1 H, m, ₂-H), 4.02 (1 H, dd, J = 11.6, 6.4 Hz, SOCH), 4.46 (1 H, dd, J = 11.6, 2.9 Hz, SOCH), 8.12 (2 H, m, Ph ₂,₆-H₂), 8.40 (2 H, m, Ph ₃,₅-H₂); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 44.42 (₃-C), 48.61 (₂-C), 71.62 (SOCH₂), 124.43 (Ph ₃,₅-C₂), 129.24 (Ph ₂,₆-C₂), 141.59 (Ph ₁-C), 150.84 (Ph ₄-C).

5.30 tert-Butyl N-(R-1-iodo-2-(N-(oxiranymethyl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (95)

Compound 67 (21 mg, 43 µmol), K₂CO₃ (26 mg, 0.19 mmol) and R-oxiran-2-ylmethyl 4-nitrobenzenesulfonate 93 (17 mg, 66 µmol) were stirred in acetone (20 mL) at 50°C and stirred under N₂ for 3 d. Sat. aq. NaHCO₃ was added to the mixture, which was extracted with EtOAc. The organic phase was washed with brine and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 19:1 → 9:1) gave 95 as two separable diastereoisomers. Diastereoisomer 1, (7.8 mg, 34%) as a yellow oil: Rᵣ = 0.4 (petroleum ether / EtOAc 4:1). Diastereoisomer 2, (9.08 mg, 39%) as a pale yellow oil: Rᵣ = 0.5 petroleum ether / EtOAc 4:1). With diastereoisomer 2, two rotamers about the F₃COC—N were evident by NMR in the ratio 1.3:1 (A:B).

MS (ES⁺) m/z 537.0504 (M +H) (C₂₀H₂₁F₃N₂O₄ requires 537.0498).

Diastereoisomer 1

¹H NMR [(CDCl₃) (NOESY)] δ 1.55 (9 H, s, Bu⁵), 2.78 (1 H, dd, J = 4.7, 2.6 Hz, oxirane 3-H), 2.95 (1 H, t, J = 4.5 Hz, oxirane 3-H), 3.49 (1 H, m, oxirane 2-H), 4.30 (1 H, dd, J = 12.2, 6.2 Hz, CHNCOCF₃), 4.71 (1 H, dd, J = 12.2, 2.8 Hz, CHNCOCF₃), 6.70 (1 H, s, NH), 7.47 (1 H, t, J = 7.7 Hz, 6-H), 7.57 (1 H, m, 7-H), 7.63 (1 H, s, 3-H), 7.76 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, 5-H), 8.19 (1 H, d, J = 8.5 Hz, 8-H); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.29 (CMe₃),
44.85 (oxirane 3-C), 48.89 (oxirane 2-C), 69.29 (CH$_2$NCOCF$_3$), 81.25 (CMe$_3$), 85.75 (1-C), 110.89 (3-C), 115.72 (q, $J = 284.6$ Hz, CF$_3$), 120.33 (5-C), 123.42 (4a-C), 125.48 (6-C), 128.25 (7-C), 132.53 (8-C), 134.43 (4-C), 134.95 (8a-C), 145.08 (2-C), 152.71 (C=O Boc); $^{19}$F NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ -75.62 (s, CF$_3$).

**Diastereoisomer 2**

**Rotamer A**

$^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (NOESY)] δ 1.56 (9 H, s, Bu'), 2.56 (1 H, dd, $J = 4.8, 2.5$ Hz, oxirane 3-H), 2.84 (1 H, m, oxirane 3-H), 3.17 (1 H, dd, $J = 14.3, 7.1$ Hz, CHNCOCF$_3$), 3.44 (1 H, m, oxirane 2-H), 4.63 (1 H, dd, $J = 14.3, 3.9$ Hz, CHNCOCF$_3$), 6.99 (1 H, s, NH), 7.63-7.67 (2 H, m, 6,7-H$_2$), 8.18 (1 H, s, 3-H), 8.31 (1 H, m, 8-H), $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.33 (CMe$_3$), 45.67 (oxirane 3-C), 49.31 (oxirane 2-C), 54.66 (CH$_2$NCOCF$_3$), 81.64 (CMe$_3$), 99.03 (1-C), 115.88 (q, $J = 288.4$ Hz, CF$_3$), 118.47 (3-C), 120.59 (5-C), 125.80 (4a-C), 128.05 (6-C), 128.78 (7-C), 134.42 (8-C), 135.06 (8a-C), 135.09 (4-C), 140.80 (2-C), 152.43 (Boc C=O), 157.09 (q, $J = 36.5$ Hz, F$_3$CC=O); $^{19}$F NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ -68.52 (s, CF$_3$).

**Rotamer B**

$^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (NOESY)] δ 1.56 (9 H, s, Bu'), 2.45 (1 H, dd, $J = 4.6, 2.4$ Hz, oxirane 3-C), 2.84 (1 H, m, oxirane 3-H), 3.34 (1 H, m, oxirane 2-H), 3.38 (1 H, dd, $J = 13.6, 5.8$ Hz, CHNCOCF$_3$), 4.55 (1 H, dd, $J = 13.8, 4.6$ Hz, CHNCOCF$_3$), 6.99 (1 H, s, NH), 7.63-7.67 (2 H, m, 6,7-H$_2$), 7.86 (1 H, m, 5-H), 8.06 (1 H, s, 3-H), 8.31 (1 H, m, 8-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.30 (CMe$_3$), 46.70 (oxirane 3-C), 48.02 (oxirane 2-C), 53.29 (CH$_2$NCOCF$_3$), 81.68 (CMe$_3$), 99.45 (1-C), 115.88 (q, $J = 288.4$ Hz, CF$_3$), 118.47 (3-C), 120.59 (5-C), 125.80 (4a-C), 128.05 (6-C), 128.78 (7-C), 134.42 (8-C), 135.06 (8a-C), 135.09 (4-C), 140.80 (2-C), 152.43 (Boc C=O), 157.09 (q, $J = 36.5$ Hz, F$_3$CC=O); $^{19}$F NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ -68.40 (s, CF$_3$).
5.31 (S)-tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-((oxiran-2-ylmethyl)amino)-naphthalen-4-yl)-carbamate (97)

MeLi in Et₂O (1.6 M, 0.24 mL, 0.39 mmol) was added dropwise (~5 min) to a stirred suspension of CuCN (17.4 mg, 0.19 mmol) in dry THF (0.6 mL) at −78°C under N₂ and the mixture was stirred for 5 min. The mixture was brought to −40°C and stirred for 30 min. After cooling again to −78°C, compound 95 (65.6 mg, 0.12 mmol) in dry THF (0.6 mL) was added dropwise and stirring was continued at −78°C. The mixture was allowed to warm gradually and was stirred at 25°C for 3 d. Water was added to the mixture and EtOAc was used to extract product. The organic phase was washed with brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 9:1) gave 97 (Conformer A:B 1:1.4) (39.4 mg, 73%) as a yellow solid: Rₜ = 0.7 (EtOAc / petroleum ether 1:4); mp 127-128°C; IR νₘₐₓ 3389, 3336 (NH), 3082 (ring CH), 1699 (C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 463.0522 (M + Na) (C₁₈H₂₁N₂NaO₃ requires 463.0495).

Conformer A

¹H NMR [(CDCl₃) (NOESY)] δ 1.56 (9 H, s, Bu'), 2.78 (1 H, d, J = 2.7 Hz, NHCH₂CHOCH), 2.86 (1 H, d, J = 4.0 Hz, NHCH₂CHOCH), 3.27 (1 H, m, NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 3.51 (1 H, dd, J = 6.2, 4.6 Hz, NHCHCHOCH₂), 3.75 (1 H, dd, J = 5.7, 3.5 Hz, NHCHCHOCH₂), 4.87 (1 H, t, J = 5.8 Hz, oxirane NH), 6.93 (1 H, s, Boc NH), 7.26 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.1, 6.8, 1.1 Hz, 6- H), 7.45 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.1, 6.8, 1.2 Hz, 7-H), 7.62 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, 5-H), 7.74 (1 H, s, 3-H), 7.99 (1 H, dd, J = 8.6, 0.6 Hz, 8-H); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.32 (CMe₃), 45.38 (NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 45.44 (NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 50.82 (NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 78.88 (1-C), 80.91 (CMe₃), 105.08 (3-C), 120.13 (5-C), 120.74 (4a-C), 122.63 (6-C), 128.10 (7-C), 131.02 (8-C), 135.03 (4-C), 135.59 (8a-C), 145.84 (2-C), 152.84 (C=O).

Conformer B

¹H NMR [(CDCl₃) (NOESY)] δ 1.56 (9 H, s, Bu'), 2.77 (1 H, d, J = 2.6 Hz, NHCH₂CHOCH), 2.84 (1 H, d, J = 4.0 Hz, NHCH₂CHOCH), 3.25-3.29 (1 H, m, NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 3.55 (1 H, dd, J = 6.2, 4.6 Hz, NHCHCHOCH₂), 3.71 (1 H, dd, J = 5.7, 3.5 Hz, NHCHCHOCH₂), 4.87 (1 H, t, J = 5.8 Hz, oxirane NH), 6.93 (1 H, s, Boc NH), 7.26 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.1, 6.8, 1.1 Hz, 6-H), 7.45 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.1, 6.8, 1.2 Hz, 7-H), 7.62 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, 5-H), 7.74 (1 H, s, 3-H), 7.99 (1 H, dd, J = 8.6, 0.6 Hz, 8-H); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.32 (CMe₃), 45.38 (NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 45.44 (NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 50.82 (NHCH₂CHOCH₂), 78.88
(1-C), 80.91 (CMe$_3$), 105.08 (3-C), 120.13 (5-C), 120.74 (4a-C), 122.63 (6-C), 128.10 (7-C),
131.02 (8-C), 135.03 (4-C), 135.59 (8a-C), 145.84 (2-C), 152.84 (C=O).

5.32 Preliminary study using Bu$_3^t$ZnLi$_2$ as a reagent for cyclisation of terminal epoxides

5.32.1 4-(Prop-2-enyl)phenol (99)

ZnCl$_2$ in THF (0.7 M, 4.10 mL, 2.9 mmol) was added to dry THF (5 mL) under N$_2$.
Bu'Li in pentane (1.7 M, 6.70 mL, 11 mmol) was added dropwise to the solution at
−78°C; the solution was brought to 0°C and stirred for 30 min. 4-Iodophenol 98 (285
mg, 1.3 mmol) in dry THF (5 mL) was added dropwise to the solution at −78°C. The
mixture was warmed to 20°C and stirred for 2 h. 3-Bromopropene (780 mg, 6.45
mmol) was added and the mixture was stirred at 40°C for 3 d. After cooling to 20°C, the
reaction was quenched with sat. aq. NH$_4$Cl and the mixture was diluted with aq. HCl (2 M).
The mixture was extracted with Et$_2$O. The organic layer was washed with brine and dried.
Evaporation gave crude 99 as a brown oil (200 mg). NMR showed a mixture of product
(66%) and starting material (33%): $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ 3.32 (2 H, d, $J$ = 6.6 Hz, Pr 1-H$_2$),
5.05 (2 H, m, Pr 3-H$_2$), 5.93 (1 H, ddt, $J$ = 16.6, 11.9, 6.7 Hz, Pr 2-H), 6.77 (2 H, d, $J$ = 9.4
Hz, Ph 2,6-H$_2$), 7.05 (2 H, d, $J$ = 9.4 Hz, Ph 3,5-H$_2$); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ
38.30 (Pr 1-C), 114.27 (Ph 2,6-C$_2$), 114.41 (Pr 3-C), 128.67 (Ph 3,5-C$_2$), 131.17 (4-C), 136.84
(Pr 2-C), 152.86 (Ph 1-C).

5.33 tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(N-(prop-2-enyl)-2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalene4-yl)-N-(prop-2-enyl)carbamate (103)

Compound 67 (99.4 mg, 0.21 mmol), K$_2$CO$_3$ (119 mg, 0.83 mmol)
and 3-bromopropene (0.06 mL, 84 mg, 0.69 mmol) in acetone (15
mL) were stirred at 50°C under N$_2$ for 16 h. Sat. aq. NaHCO$_3$ was
added and mixture was extracted with EtOAc. Washing with brine,
drying and evaporation gave 103 (diastereoisomers A / B 1.4:1) (115
mg, 99%) as a yellow oil: R$_f$ = 0.7 (petroleum ether / EtOAc 4:1); IR
$v_{\text{max}}$ 1698 (C=O); MS (ES$^+$) $m/z$ 583.0804 (M + Na) (C$_{23}$H$_{24}$F$_3$IN$_2$NaO$_3$ requires 583.0681).
**Diasteroisomer A**

$^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (COSY)] $\delta$ 1.23 (9 H, br, Bu$^t$), 3.71 (1 H, dd, $J = 14.4$, 8.3 Hz, CF$_3$CONCH), 3.83 (1 H, dd, $J = 14.9$, 7.4 Hz, BocNCH), 4.64 (1 H, m, BocNCH), 4.98-5.21 (5 H, m, 2 $\times$ propenyl 3-H, CF$_3$CONCH), 5.85-5.94 (2 H, m, 2 $\times$ propenyl 2-H), 7.11 (1 H, s, 3-H), 7.61-7.68 (2 H, m, 6.7-H$_2$), 7.80-7.85 (1 H, m, 5-H), 8.29-8.32 (1 H, m, 8-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 27.88 (CMe$_3$), 52.45 (BocNCH$_2$), 53.69 (CF$_3$CONCC), 80.78 (CMe$_3$), 105.48 (1-C), 115.94 (q, $J = 289.4$ Hz, CF$_3$), 118.46 (BocNCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 120.92 (CF$_3$CONCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 123.57 (5-C), 128.11 (3-C), 128.52 (6-C or 7-C), 128.91 (7-C or 6-C), 130.31 (CF$_3$CONCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 130.99 (4a-C), 133.37 (BocNCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 133.87 (8-C), 135.71 (8a-C), 139.39 (2-C), 139.86 (4-C), 154.53 (Boc C=O), 156.50 (q, $J = 35.0$ Hz, CF$_3$C=O); $^{19}$F NMR (CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ -68.65 (s, CF$_3$).

**Diastereoisomer B**

$^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (COSY)] $\delta$ 1.23 (9 H, br, Bu$^t$), 3.76 (1 H, dd, $J = 14.4$, 8.0 Hz, CF$_3$CONCH), 3.95 (1 H, dd, $J = 14.7$, 7.1 Hz, BocNCH), 4.53 (1 H, m, BocNCH), 4.98-5.21 (5 H, m, 2 $\times$ propenyl 3-H, CF$_3$CONCH), 5.85-5.94 (2 H, m, 2 $\times$ propenyl 2-H), 7.11 (1 H, s, 3-H), 7.61-7.68 (2 H, m, 6.7-H$_2$), 7.80-7.85 (1 H, m, 5-H), 8.29-8.32 (1 H, m, 8-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 28.11 (CMe$_3$), 52.45 (BocNCH$_2$), 53.69 (CF$_3$CONCC), 80.78 (CMe$_3$), 105.48 (1-C), 115.94 (q, $J = 289.4$ Hz, CF$_3$), 118.46 (BocNCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 120.92 (CF$_3$CONCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 123.42 (5-C), 127.79 (3-C), 128.52 (6-C or 7-C), 128.91 (7-C or 6-C), 130.31 (CF$_3$CONCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 130.99 (4a-C), 133.37 (BocNCH$_2$CHCH$_2$), 133.87 (8-C), 135.71 (8a-C), 139.39 (2-C), 139.86 (4-C), 154.53 (Boc C=O), 156.50 (q, $J = 36.0$ Hz, CF$_3$C=O); $^{19}$F NMR (CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ -68.58 (s, CF$_3$).

**5.34 tert-Butyl N-(1-iodo-2-(N-(prop-2-eny1) 2,2,2-trifluoroacetamido)naphthalen-4-yl)carbamate (104)**

Compound 67 (1.22 mg, 2.5 mmol) was stirred in THF (10 mL) and potassium tert-butoxide (318 mg, 2.8 mmol) added. This was stirred at 20°C under N$_2$ for 30 min followed by addition of 3-bromopropene (0.700 mL, 973 mg, 8.04 mmol). The mixture was stirred for 2 h and heated to 50°C overnight. Sat. aq. NaHCO$_3$ was added. Extraction with EtOAc, drying, evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether $\rightarrow$ petroleum ether / EtOAc 19:1) gave 104 as diastereoisomer A (yellow oil, 750 mg, 57%): $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum
ether / EtOAc 4:1), and diastereoisomer B (yellow solid, 200 mg, 15%): Rf = 0.5 (petroleum ether / EtOAc 4:1); mp 146-147°C.

**Diastereoisomer A**

$^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (NOESY)] δ 1.55 (9 H, s, Bu'), 3.82 (1 H, dd, J = 14.5, 7.6 Hz, propenyl 1-H), 4.96 (1 H, dd, J = 14.5, 5.6 Hz, propenyl 1-H), 5.18 (1 H, dq, J = 18.0, 1.3 Hz, propenyl 3-H$_{\text{TRANS}}$) 5.22 (1 H, dq, J = 11.0, 1.0 Hz, propenyl 3-H$_{\text{CIS}}$), 5.92-5.98 (1 H, m, propenyl 2-H), 7.01 (1 H, s, NH), 7.7.61-7.67 (2 H, m, 6,7-H), 7.83-7.87 (1 H, m, 5-H), 7.93 (1 H, s, 3-H), 8.28-8.32 (1 H, m, 8-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 28.27 (C$_{Me_3}$), 54.00 (propenyl 1-C), 81.56 (CMe$_3$), 115.89 (q, J = 288.7 Hz, CF$_3$), 118.90 (3-C), 120.59 (propenyl 3-C), 120.66 (5-C), 127.92 (6-C or 7-C), 128.67 (7-C or 6-C), 130.30 (propenyl 3-C), 134.38 (8-C), 134.70 (8a-C), 135.39 (4-C), 140.14 (2-C), 152.45 (Boc C=O), 156.53 (q, J = 36.5 Hz, CF$_3$CC=O); $^{19}$F NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ -68.55 (s, CF$_3$); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 559.0154 (M + K) (C$_{20}$H$_{20}$F$_3$IN$_2$KO$_3$ requires 559.0107); 543.0437 (M + Na) (C$_{20}$H$_{20}$F$_3$IN$_2$NaO$_3$ requires 543.0368); 521.0516 (M + H) (C$_{20}$H$_{21}$F$_3$IN$_2$O$_3$ requires 521.0549); 486.9814 [(M - Bu') + Na] (C$_{16}$H$_{12}$F$_3$IN$_2$NaO$_3$ requires 486.9742).

**Diastereoisomer B**

$^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (NOESY)] δ 1.56 (9 H, s, Bu'), 3.95 (1 H, dd, J = 14.2, 7.4 Hz, propenyl 1-H), 4.84 (1 H, dd, J = 14.2, 6.1 Hz, propenyl 1-H), 5.12 (1 H, dd, J = 17.0, 1.3 Hz, propenyl 3-H$_{\text{TRANS}}$), 5.21 (1 H, dd, J = 10.1, 1.1 Hz, propenyl 3-H$_{\text{CIS}}$), 5.91-5.97 (1 H, m, propenyl 2-H), 7.27 (1 H, s, NH), 7.51 (1 H, dd, J = 8.2, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 6-H), 7.60 (1 H, dd, J = 8.3, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 7-H), 7.67 (1 H, d, J = 8.3 Hz, 5-H), 8.17 (1 H, d, J = 8.1 Hz, 8-H), 8.27 (1 H, s, 3-H); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 27.30 (C$_{Me_3}$), 53.30 (propenyl 1-C), 80.76 (CMe$_3$), 91.92 (1-C), 115.16 (q, J = 288.6 Hz, CF$_3$), 119.84 (3-C), 120.03 (propenyl 3-C), 121.93 (5-C), 125.63 (6-C), 126.43 (4a-C), 127.97 (7-C), 129.49 (propenyl 2-C), 131.56 (8-C), 134.31 (4-C), 135.26 (8a-C), 136.78 (2-C), 151.32 (Boc C=O), 156.35 (q, J = 36.3 Hz, CF$_3$CC=O); $^{19}$F NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ -68.20 (CF$_3$); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 559.0149 (M + K) (C$_{20}$H$_{20}$F$_3$IN$_2$KO$_3$ requires 559.0107); 543.0371 (M + Na) (C$_{20}$H$_{20}$F$_3$IN$_2$NaO$_3$ requires 543.0368); 538.0828 (M + NH$_4$) (C$_{20}$H$_{24}$F$_3$IN$_3$O$_3$ requires 538.0809).
5.35 tert-Butyl  \(N-(1-(2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-yloxy)methyl)-3\)-(trifluoroacetyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (105)

Compound 104 (38.1 mg, 73 µmol) in benzene (2.0 mL) was treated sequentially with TEMPO (35.7 mg, 0.23 mmol) and \(\text{Bu}_3\text{SnH}\) (0.020 mL, 21 mg, 73 µmol). The mixture was heated to 60°C and stirred at this temperature for 135 min. Additional \(\text{Bu}_3\text{SnH}\) (0.020 mL, 21 mg, 73 µmol) was added at 30 min, 60 min and 90 min. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 49:1 → 19:1) gave 105 (24.1 mg, 60%) as a yellow solid: \(R_f = 0.6\) (petroleum ether / EtOAc 19:1); mp 160-161°C; IR \(\nu_{\text{max}}\) 3364, 3129, 3266 (NH), 1700 (C=O); \(^1\text{H NMR} ([\text{CDCl}_3])\) \(\delta\) 0.90 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.00 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.07 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.20 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.25, (1 H, m, piperidine 4-H), 1.29 (1 H, m, piperidine 3-H or 5-H), 1.35 (1 H, m, piperidine 3-H or 5-H), 1.42 (1 H, m, piperidine 3-H or 5-H), 1.54 (1 H, m, piperidine 4-H), 1.54 (9 H, s, \(\text{Bu}^t\)), 1.66 (1 H, m, piperidine 3-H or 5-H), 3.83 (1 H, t, \(J = 8.8\) Hz, NOCH), 3.99 (1 H, m, 1-H), 4.08 (1 H, dd, \(J = 8.9, 4.3\) Hz, NOCH), 4.30 (1 H, t, \(J = 8.7\) Hz, 2-H), 4.61 (1 H, d, \(J = 10.9\) Hz, 2-H), 6.10 (1 H, s, NH), 7.47 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.8\) Hz, 7-H), 7.53 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.6\) Hz, 8-H), 7.81 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.3\) Hz, 9-H), 7.90 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.4\) Hz, 6-H), 8.79 (1 H, s, 4-H); \(^{13}\text{C NMR} ([\text{CDCl}_3])\) (HSQC / HMBC) \(\delta\) 16.97 (piperidine 4-C), 19.97 (piperidine Me), 20.05 (piperidine Me), 28.30 (CMe), 32.92 (piperidine Me), 32.96 (piperidine Me), 39.52 (piperidine 3-C or 5-C), 39.60 (piperidine 5-C or 3-C), 39.86 (1-C), , 52.42 (2-C), 59.88 (piperidine 2,6-C), \(~77.26\) (NOCH), 81.05 (CMe), 111.17 (4-C), 116.20 (q, \(J = 288.1\) Hz, CF_3), 122.15 (6-C), 123.13 (9b-C), 124.01 (9-C), 125.36 (7-C), 125.52 (5a-C), 127.06 (8-C), 129.77 (9a-C), 134.19 (5-C), 139.56 (3a-C), 153.34 (Boc C=O), 154.28 (q, \(J = 37.5\) Hz, CF_3C=O); \(^{19}\text{F NMR} ([\text{CDCl}_3])\) \(\delta\) -72.21 (s, CF_3); MS (ES\(^+\)) \(m/z\) 572.2804 (M + Na) (C_{29}H_{38}F_3N_3NaO_4 requires 572.2712), 550.2937 (M + H) (C_{29}H_{39}F_3N_3O_4 requires 550.2893), 516.2095 [(M-Bu\(^t\)) + Na] (C_{25}H_{30}F_3N_3NaO_4 requires 516.2086).
5.36 tert-Butyl N-(1-((2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-yloxy)methyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (106)

Compound 105 (70.4 mg, 0.13 mmol) was dissolved in THF (4 mL) and aq. NaOH (5 M, 4 mL) added. The mixture was stirred at 20°C for 105 min. Water was added to the mixture and extracted with EtOAc. Washing with brine, drying and evaporation gave 106 (60.7 mg, 100%) as a yellow oil: Rf = 0.35 (petroleum ether / EtOAc 9:1); IR νmax 3376 (NH), 1715 (C=O); 1H NMR [(CDCl3) (NOESY)] δ 1.06 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.14 (6 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.16 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.16-1.42 (6 H, m, piperidine 3,4,5-H6), 1.54 (9 H, s, Bu3), 3.70-3.75 (2 H, m, 2-H2), 3.80-3.90 (2 H, m, 1-H, NOCH), 4.00 (1 H, dd, J = 7.6, 4.2 Hz, NOCH), 6.86 (1 H, t, J = 7.5 Hz, 7-H or 8-H), 7.38 (1 H, t, J = 7.1 Hz, 8-H or 7-H), 7.51 (1 H, s, 4-H), 7.69 (2 H, d, J = 8.6 Hz, 6.9-H2); 13C NMR [(CDCl3) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 17.07 (piperidine 4-C), 20.07 (piperidine Me), 20.26 (piperidine Me), 28.33 (CMe3), 32.93 (piperidine Me), 33.34 (piperidine Me), 39.45 (piperidine 3-C or 5-C), 39.59 (piperidine 5-C or 3-C), 41.05 (1-C), 51.29 (2-C), 59.63 (piperidine 2-C or 6-C), 59.72 (piperidine 6-C or 2-C), 76.68-77.32 (NOCH2), 80.54 (CMe3), 105.52 (4-C), 116.77 (5a,9b-C2), 120.98 (6-C or 9-C), 121.52 (7-C or 8-C), 123.23 (9-C or 6-C), 126.29 (8-C or 7-C), 131.41 (9a-C), 133.52 (5-C), 149.40 (3a-C), 153.34 (C=O); MS (ES+) m/z 476.2924 (M + Na) (C27H39N3NaO3 requires 476.2810), 454.3107 (M + H) (C27H40N3O3 requires 454.3070).

5.37 N,N-Dimethyl-2-(4-nitrophenoxy)ethylamine (108)

KOH (5.17 g, 92 mmol) in dry EtOH (40 mL) was added to 4-nitrophenol 107 (14.2 g, 0.10 mol) in dry EtOH (30 mL). Filtration, washing (cold dry EtOH) and drying gave potassium 4-nitrophenoxide (16.1 g, 89%) as an orange solid. NaOH (4.28 g, 73 mmol) in water (25 mL) was added to 2-chloro-N,N-dimethyl ethylammonium chloride (12.6 g, 88 mol) in water (50 mL). The mixture was saturated with NaCl and extracted with toluene (5 × 50 mL). The combined toluene fractions were dried over KOH and added to a suspension of potassium 4-nitrophenoxide (14.0 g, 83 mmol) in toluene (80 mL). The mixture was heated under reflux for 17 h. Cooling, filtration and evaporation gave 108 (10.4 g, 63%) as a yellow oil: Rf = 0.2 (EtOAc / petroleum ether 1:1); IR νmax 1517.34 (NO2); 1H NMR (CDCl3) δ 2.26 (6 H, s, NMe2), 2.69 (2 H, t, J = 5.6 Hz, NCH2), 4.08 (2 H, t, J = 5.6 Hz, OCH2), 6.88 (2 H, d, J = 9.3 Hz, Ph 2.6-H2), 8.08 (2 H, d, J = 9.3 Hz, Ph 3.5-H2); 13C NMR (CDCl3) δ 45.76 (NMe2), 170
57.87 (NCH₂), 66.65 (OCH₂), 114.78 (Ph-C₂), 125.75 (Ph-C₂), 141.48 (Ph-C₉), 163.88 (Ph-C₉). A sample was converted to the HCl salt and recrystallised (Pr°OH): mp 165-166°C (lit.¹⁹⁴ mp Pr°OH 166-167°C); ¹H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] δ 2.81 (6 H, s, NMe₂), 3.53 (2 H, t, J = 5.1 Hz, NCH₂), 4.51 (2 H, t, J = 5.1, OCH₂), 7.20 (2 H, d, J = 9.2 Hz, Ph 2,6-), 8.20 (2 H, d, J = 9.2 Hz, Ph 3,5-); ¹³C NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 42.68 (NMe₂), 54.91 (NCH₂), 63.17 (OCH₂), 115.34 (Ph 2,6-), 125.81 (Ph 3,5-), 141.36 (Ph 1-), 162.72 (Ph 4-).

5.38 2-(4-Aminophenoxy)-N,N-dimethylethylamine (109)

Compound 108 (160 mg, 0.76 mmol) was added dropwise to conc. aq. HCl (2.0 mL, 66 mmol) and SnCl₂.2H₂O (626 mg, 2.8 mmol). The mixture was stirred at 0°C for 30 min and then at room temperature for 19 h. The mixture was made basic by addition of conc. aq. NaOH, then extracted four times with CH₂Cl₂. The combined organic phase was washed with water and dried and the solvent was evaporated to give 109 (120 mg, 88%) as a buff oil: Rf = 0.6 (MeOH / CH₂Cl₂ 1:9); IR υₘₐₓ 3397 (NH), 3302 (NH), 3204 (NH); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 2.29 (6 H, s, NMe₂), 2.65 (2 H, t, J = 5.8 Hz, NCH₂), 3.96 (2 H, t, J = 5.8 Hz, OCH₂), 6.58 (2 H, d, J = 8.8 Hz, Ph 3,5-), 6.72 (2 H, d, J = 8.8 Hz, Ph 2,6-); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 45.83 (2 C, 2 × Me), 58.43 (NCH₂), 66.74 (OCH₂), 115.82 (Ph 2,6-), 116.36 (Ph 3,5-), 140.22 ( Ph 4-), 151.78 (Ph 1-).

5.39 Ethyl 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (110)

Compound 109 (1.07 g, 5.9 mmol) in water (10 mL) and conc. aq. HCl (3.0 mL) was diazotised at −20°C with NaNO₂ (476 mg, 6.9 mmol) in water (2.0 mL). The cold solution was added in one portion to a vigorously stirred ice-cold mixture of ethyl 2-methyl-3-oxobutanoate (895 mg, 6.2 mmol), NaOAc (5.18 g, 63 mmol), EtOH (8.0 mL) and ice (7.0 g). The mixture was stirred at 20°C for 16 h and then cooled to 0°C, basified by slow addition of Na₂CO₃ and extracted with CH₂Cl₂. The organic layers were combined and washed with water and dried. The evaporation residue was extracted with hot hexanes in the presence of decolourising charcoal and the solvent was evaporated from the clarified solution. The residue, in EtOH (4.0 mL), was treated with sat. ethanolic HCl (3.0 mL) and heated under reflux for 30 min. The evaporation residue was partitioned between dilute aq. Na₂CO₃ and CH₂Cl₂. The organic layer was washed with water and sat. brine and dried. Evaporation and
recrystallisation gave 110 (25 mg, 15%): \( R_f = 0.3 \) (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); mp 108-109 (lit. mp 110°C); IR \( \nu_{\text{max}} \) 3315 (NH), 1687 (C=O); \(^1\)H NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \( \delta \) 1.39 (3 H, t, \( J = 7.1 \) Hz, OCH\(_2\)Me), 2.35 (6 H, s, NMe\(_2\)), 2.76 (2 H, t, \( J = 5.8 \) Hz, (Me)\(_2\)NCH\(_2\)CH\(_2\)), 4.10 (2 H, t, \( J = 5.8 \) Hz, (Me)\(_2\)NCH\(_2\)CH\(_2\)), 4.39 (2 H, q, \( J = 7.1 \) Hz, OCH\(_2\)Me), 6.99 (1 H, dd, \( J = 8.9, 2.4 \) Hz, 6-H), 7.07 (1 H, d, \( J = 2.4 \) Hz, 4-H), 7.12 (1 H, dd, \( J = 2.1, 0.8 \) Hz, 3-H), 7.28 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.9 \) Hz, 7-H), 9.30 (1 H, s, NH); \(^{13}\)C NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \( \delta \) 14.32 (OCH\(_2\)Me), 45.83 (NMe\(_2\)), 58.38 (Me)\(_2\)NCH\(_2\)C\(_2\)H\(_2\)), 60.82 (OCH\(_2\)Me), 66.57 (Me)\(_2\)NCH\(_2\)C\(_2\)H\(_2\)), 103.67 (4-C), 108.13 (3-C), 112.69 (7-C), 117.37 (6-C), 127.74 (2-C), 127.89 (3a-C), 132.42 (7a-C), 153.83 (5-C), 162.01 (C=O).

### 5.40 Preliminary test of the use of ethanolic HCl for esterification

**5.40.1 Ethyl 2-(1H-indol-3-yl)acetate (123).**

Indole-3-acetic acid 122 (122 mg, 0.70 mmol), was stirred in conc. ethanolic HCl (20 mL) and heated under reflux for 1 h. The solvent was evaporated and the mixture was dissolved in EtOAc. This solution was washed with sat. aq. NaHCO\(_3\) and brine. Drying and evaporation yielded 123 (116 mg, 82%) as a pale buff oil: \(^1\)H NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \( \delta \) 1.28 (3 H, t, \( J = 7.0 \) Hz, Me), 3.78 (2 H, s, indole CH\(_2\)), 4.19 (2 H, q, \( J = 7.1 \) Hz, OCH\(_2\)), 7.08 (1 H, s, indole 2-H), 7.15 (1 H, t, \( J = 7.5 \) Hz, indole 6-H), 7.21 (1 H, t, \( J = 7.5 \) Hz, indole 5-H), 7.31 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.0 \) Hz, indole 7-H), 7.60 (1 H, d, \( J = 7.8 \) Hz, indole 4-H), 8.14 (1 H, br, NH); \(^{13}\)C NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \( \delta \) 13.19 (Me), 31.39 (indole CH\(_2\)), 60.77 (OCH\(_2\)), 108.38 (indole 3-H), 111.19 (indole 7-H), 118.81 (indole 4-H), 119.54 (indole 5-H), 122.06 (indole 6-H), 123.11 (indole 2-H), 127.21 (indole 3a-C), 136.12 (indole 7a-C), 172.21 (C=O).

**5.41 Ethyl 5-hydroxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (125)**

**METHOD A**

SOCl\(_2\) (1 mL, 1.64 g, 14 mmol) was added dropwise to 5-hydroxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylic acid 124 (116 mg, 0.66 mmol) in absolute ethanol (10 mL). This mixture was boiled under reflux at 80°C for 1 h. The mixture was allowed to cool to room temperature. The solvent was evaporated and the crude mixture, in EtOAc, was washed with aq. NaHCO\(_3\) (5%) and with brine. Drying and evaporation gave 125 (4.1 mg, 3%) as a buff solid with properties below.
METHOD B

5-Hydroxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylic acid 124 (1.53 g, 8.6 mmol) was heated under reflux in conc. ethanolic HCl (100 mL) under N₂ for 4 h. The solvent was evaporated and the residue dissolved in EtOAc. This was washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH₂Cl₂ → CH₂Cl₂ / EtOAc 4:1) gave 125 (1.64, 92%) as a white solid:

R₁ = 0.8 (EtOAc); mp 152-154°C (lit.195 146-148°C); IR νmax 3316, 3209 (OH, NH), 1696 (C=O); ¹H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] δ 1.38 (3 H, t, J = 7.1 Hz, Me), 4.37 (2 H, q, J = 7.1 Hz, CH₂), 6.86 (1 H, dd, J = 8.8, 2.4 Hz, 6-H), 6.97 (1 H, d, J = 2.3 Hz, 4-H), 7.00 (1 H, dd, J = 2.1, 0.8 Hz, 3-H), 7.32 (1 H, d, J = 8.8 Hz, 7-H), 8.93 (1 H, s, OH). ¹³C NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] δ 14.29 (Me), 60.17 (CH₂), 104.43 (4-C), 106.66 (3-C), 113.07 (7-C), 116.15 (6-C), 127.36 (2-C or 3a-C), 127.44 (3a-C or 2-C), 132.21 (7a-C), 151.34 (5-C), 161.30 (C=O).

5.42 Ethyl 5-ethoxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (126)

5-Hydroxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylic acid 124 (2.00 g, 11 mmol) was boiled under reflux in conc. ethanolic HCl (25 mL) under N₂ for 16 h. The solvent was evaporated and the residue in EtOAc was washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH₂Cl₂ → CH₂Cl₂ / EtOAc 4:1) gave 126 (236 mg, 10%) as a white solid: R₁ = 0.7 (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:1); mp 147-148°C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 1.41 (3 H, t, J = 7.2 Hz, ester Me), 1.43 (3 H, t, J = 7.0 Hz, ether Me), 4.06 (2 H, q, J = 7.0 Hz, ether CH₂), 4.40 (2 H, q, J = 7.1 Hz, ester CH₂), 6.99 (1 H, dd, J = 8.9, 2.4 Hz, 6-H), 7.07 (1 H, d, J = 2.4 Hz, 4-H), 7.13 (1 H, dd, J = 2.1, 0.9 Hz, 3-H), 7.30 (1 H, d, J = 9.0 Hz, 7-H), 8.89 (1 H, s, NH); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 14.33 (ester Me), 14.87 (ether Me), 60.31 (ester CH₂), 63.93 (ether CH₂), 103.65 (4-C), 108.13 (3-C), 112.60 (7-C), 117.34 (6-C), 127.81 (2-C), 127.85 (3a-C), 132.21 (7a-C), 153.92 (5-C), 161.89 (C=O); MS (ES⁺) mz 256.0957 (M + Na) (C₁₃H₁₅NNaO₃ requires 256.0950), 234.1125 (M + H) (C₁₃H₁₆NO₃ requires 234.1130).

5.43 Ethyl 5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylate (110)

To a solution of ethyl-5-hydroxy-1H-indole-2-carboxylate 125 (1.68 g, 8.2 mmol) in CHCl₃ (40 mL) was added 2-chloro-N,N-dimethylaniline hydrochloride (1.77 g, 12.0 mmol), K₂CO₃ (3.40 g, 25 mmol) and water (8 mL) in sequence. The stirred solution was
placed in an oil bath at 65°C and the temperature was slowly raised to 80.5°C (~1°C per 5 min) over 65 min and the mixture was stirred for 16 h. The reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature and the phases were separated. The volume of the organic phase was reduced to 25% of its original volume by evaporation. The residue was combined with the aqueous phase and diluted with water and toluene. The organic layer was separated and washed with water and extracted with aq. HCl (1.0 M). The acidic phase was washed with toluene, cooled to 0°C, basified (~pH 12) by addition of aq. NaOH (4.0 M) and extracted with toluene. The organic extract was washed with water and brine and dried and the solvent was evaporated to give 110 as a white solid (1.81 g, 80%) with properties as above (Section 5.39).

5.44 5-(2-(Dimethylamino)ethoxy)-1H-indole-2-carboxylic acid (127)

A mixture of 110 (609 mg, 2.2 mmol) and Cs₂CO₃ (2.50 g, 7.7 mmol) in MeOH (12 mL) and water (6 mL) was heated at reflux for 2 h. The mixture was evaporated to dryness. The residue was dissolved in water, and adjusted to pH 6.5 with aq. HCl (1.0 M). The mixture was placed in a refrigerator overnight and then in ice for 2 h. The resulting crystalline solid was collected, washed with ice-cold water and acetone to give 127 (419 mg, 77%) as a white crystalline solid: Rf = 0.1 (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); A portion of the product was treated with HCl in 1,4-dioxane (4.0 M) and EtOAc. Filtration gave the HCl salt of the product as a white solid: mp 238-239°C (lit. mp 237-239°C); IR vmax 3380, 3240 (OH, NH), 1593 (C=O); ¹H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] δ 2.37 (6 H, s, NMe₂), 2.81 (2 H, t, J = 5.7 Hz, (Me)₂NCH₂CH₂), 4.12 (2 H, t, J = 5.8 Hz, (Me)₂NCH₂CH₂), 6.91 (1 H, dd, J = 8.9, 2.4 Hz, 6-H), 6.95 (1 H, d, J = 1.5 Hz, 3-H), 7.14 (1 H, d, J = 2.3 Hz, 4-H), 7.35 (1 H, d, J = 8.9 Hz, 7-H), 11.50 (1 H, s, NH); ¹³C NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 45.04 (NMe₂), 57.39 (Me)₂NCH₂CH₂), 65.66 (Me)₂NCH₂CH₂), 103.18 (4-C), 106.06 (3-C), 113.21 (7-C), 115.50 (6-C), 127.27 (3a-C), 130.33 (2-C), 132.39 (7a-C), 152.69 (5-C), 163.30 (C=O).
5.45 tert-Butyl N-(3-(5-(2-(dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carbonyl)-1-((2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-yloxy)methyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (128)

Compound 127 (101 mg, 0.41 mmol) and HOBt (125 mg, 0.81 mmol) were stirred in dry DMF (10 mL) at 0°C under N₂. N,N-diisopropylcarbodiimide (0.13 mL, 106 mg, 0.81 mmol) was added via a syringe and the mixture was stirred for 1 h at 0°C. Compound 106 (203 mg, 0.37 mmol) in dry DMF (10 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was allowed to warm slowly to 20°C overnight and heated at 40°C for 2 h. Sat. aq. NaHCO₃ was added and the mixture was extracted with EtOAc. The extract was washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc → EtOAc / MeOH / Et₃N 90:10:0.1) gave 128 (163 mg, 64%) as a yellow oil: IR νmax 3447 (NH), 1727, 1693 (C=O); ¹H NMR [(CDCl₃) (NOESY)] δ 0.88 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.00 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.04 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.17 (3 H, s, piperidine Me), 1.24-1.50 (6 H, m, piperidine 3,4,5-H₆), 1.54 (9 H, s, Bu'), 2.45 (6 H, s, NMe₂), 2.88 (2 H, t, J = 5.5 Hz, OCH₂C₃H₂N(CH₃)₂), 3.87 (1 H, t, J = 8.8 Hz, NOCH), 4.03-4.07 (1 H, m, 1-H), 4.13 (1 H, dd, J = 9.0, 4.8 Hz, NOCH), 4.17 (2 H, t, J = 5.6 Hz, OCH₂C₃H₂N(CH₃)₂), 4.60 (1 H, t, J = 9.1 Hz, 2-H), 4.81 (1 H, dd, J = 10.2, 1.2 Hz, 2-H), 6.90 (1 H, s, Boc NH), 7.00 (1 H, s, indole 7-H), 7.02 (1 H, dd, J = 8.9, 2.4 Hz, indole 6-H), 7.13 (1 H, d, J = 2.1 Hz, indole 3-H), 7.36 (1 H, d, J = 8.9 Hz, indole 7-H), 7.42 (1 H, t, J = 7.5 Hz, 7-H), 7.50 (1 H, t, J = 7.2 Hz, 8-H), 7.84 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, 9-H), 7.89 (1 H, d, J = 8.5 Hz, 6-H), 8.90 (1 H, s, 4-H), 9.52 (1 H, s, indole NH); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 16.94 piperidine 4-C, 20.01 (piperidine Me), 20.16 (piperidine Me), 28.30 (CMe₃), 33.02 (piperidine Me), 39.48 (piperidine 3-C or 5-C), 39.53 (piperidine 5-C or 3-C), 40.20 (1-C), 45.51 (NCH₃), 54.66 (2-C), 58.06 (OCH₂C₃H₂N(CH₃)₂), 59.77 (piperidine 2-C or 6-C), 59.82 (piperidine 6-C or 2-C), 66.14 (OCH₂C₃H₂N(CH₃)₂), 77.64 (NOCH₂), 80.69 (CMe₃), 103.71 (indole 3-C), 105.58 (indole 4-C), 111.95 (4-C), 112.61 (indole 7-C), 116.79 (indole 6-C), 122.13 (6-C), 122.62 (9b-C), 123.91 (9-C), 124.47 (7-C), 126.60 (8-C), 128.31 (indole 3a-C), 130.07 (9a-C), 130.99 (5a-C), 131.26 (indole 7a-C), 133.71 (5-C), 141.39 (3a-C), 153.50 (indole 5-C + indole C=O), 160.23 (Boc C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 706.3970 (M + Na) (C₄₀H₅₅N₅NaO₅ requires 706.3944).
5.46 Reductive removal of the 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine protecting group

To compound 128 (123.28 mg, 0.18 mmol) was added THF (2 mL), AcOH (6 mL), H₂O (2 mL) and activated zinc dust (353.52 mg, 5.41 mmol) in a pressure tube equipped with magnetic stir bar. The reaction mixture was heated to 70°C for 2 h followed by a further addition of activated zinc dust (354 mg, 5.4 mmol) and heated to 70°C for 21 h. After cooling to room temperature and diluted with THF, the organics were filtered through Celite® and concentrated in vacuo. Chromatography (EtOAc → EtOAc / MeOH / Et₃N 95:5:0.1) gave two fractions each with a mixture of compounds. First fraction (14.01 mg) consisted of 130 and 131 whilst the second fraction (41.28 mg) consisted of 132 and 133.

![Chemical structures](image-url)

**130** NHBoc

MS (ES⁺) m/z 587.2945 (M + 1)
(C₃₃H₃₉N₄O₆ requires 587.2870)

**131** NH₂

MS (ES⁺) m/z 487.2432 (M + 1)
(C₂₉H₃₁N₄O₄ requires 487.2345)

**132** NH₂

MS (ES⁺) m/z 445.2328 (M + 1)
(C₂₆H₂₉N₄O₃ requires 445.2240)

**133** NHBoc

MS (ES⁺) m/z 545.2815 (M + 1)
(C₃₁H₃₇N₄O₅ requires 545.2764)
5.47 (5-(tert-Butoxycarbonylamino)-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy) indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-1-yl)methyl acetate (130)

The mixture of 130 and 131 (14.0 mg) and Boc₂O (62.8 mg) were boiled under reflux in dry THF (10 mL) under N₂ overnight. Evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc → EtOAc / MeOH / Et₃N 90:10:0.1) gave 130 as a pale buff solid (14.53 mg): mp 170-171°C; Rᵢ= 0.3 (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); ¹H NMR [(MeOD)] δ 1.61 (9 H, s, Bu), 2.03 (3 H, s, OAc), 2.46 (6 H, s, NMe₂), 2.88 (2 H, t, J = 5.4 Hz, C₂H₂NMe₂), 4.10 (1 H, dd, J = 10.8, 8.0 Hz, CH₂OAc), 4.19 (2 H, t, J = 5.4 Hz, OC₂H₂CH₂NMe₂), 4.16-4.22 (1 H, m, 1-H), 4.59 (1 H, dd, J = 10.8, 3.6 Hz, CHOAc), 4.68 (2 H, d, J = 4.4 Hz, 2-H), 7.04 (1 H, dd, J = 9.0, 2.4 Hz, indole 6-H), 7.11 (1 H, s, indole 3-H), 7.23 (1 H, d, J = 2.1 Hz, 4-H), 7.45 (1 H, d, J = 8.9 Hz, indole 7-H), 7.51 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.2, 6.8, 1.0 Hz, 7-H), 7.60 (1 H, ddd, J = 8.0, 6.8, 1.0 Hz, 8-H), 8.01 (1 H, d, J = 8.3 Hz, 9-H), 8.08 (1 H, d, J = 8.5 Hz, 6-H); ¹³C NMR [(MeOD) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 20.73 (OAc), 28.78 (CMe₃), 41.13 (1-C), 45.82 (NMe₂), 56.45 (2-C), 59.27 (CH₂NMe₂), 66.48 (CH₂OAc), 67.12 (OCH₂CH₂NMe₂), 81.30 (CMe₃), 104.65 (indole 4-C), 107.35 (indole 3-C), 114.01 (indole 7-C), 115.05 (4-C), 117.67 (indole 6-C), 123.93 (9b-C), 124.64 (6-C, or 9-C), 124.71 (9-C or 6-C), 125.87 (7-C), 127.90 (5a-C), 128.21 (8-C), 129.37 (indole 3a-C), 131.54 (9a-C), 132.06 (indole 2-C), 133.70 (indole 7a-C), 135.96 (indole 5-C), 142.52 (indole 3a-C), 154.91 (indole 5-C), 156.70 (Boc C=O), 162.89 (indole C=O), 172.77 (OAc C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 587.2945 (M + H) (C₃₃H₃₉N₄O₆ requires 587.2870).

5.48 tert-Butyl N-(3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy) indole-2-carbonyl)-1-(hydroxymethyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (133)

To compound 128 (122.7 mg, 0.18 mmol) were added sequentially, THF (3.0 mL), H₂O (1.0 mL), activated Zn dust (934 mg, 14.4 mmol, 80 eq.) and AcOH (1.0 mL). The mixture was heated at 70°C in a sealed pressure tube overnight. After cooling to room temperature, the mixture was filtered through Celite® and the solvents were evaporated from the filtrate. Sat aq. NaHCO₃ was added to the mixture and the suspension was extracted with EtOAc. The organic phase was washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc → EtOAc / MeOH / Et₃N
5.49 N’-(1-(Chloromethyl)-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy) indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-
dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)-N,N-dimethylformimidamide (134)

Compound 133 (29.6 mg, 54 µmol) was stirred in dry DMF (0.4 mL) under N₂ at 0°C. Et₃N (38.0 µL, 27.6 mg, 0.27 mmol) was added dropwise, followed by dropwise addition of MsCl (13.0 µL, 19.2 mg, 0.16 mmol). The mixture was stirred at 0°C for 1 h. LiCl (134 mg, 3.2 mmol) was added to the mixture which was stirred at 20°C for 3 d. Water was added and the solvent was evaporated (< 30°C). Chromatography (EtOAc → EtOAc / MeOH / Et₃N 95:5:0.1) gave 134 (21.3 mg, 76%) as a yellow solid: Rₜ = 0.2 (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); mp 229-230°C; ¹H NMR [(CDCl₃) (NOESY)] δ 2.42 (6 H, s, OCH₂CH₂NMₑ₂), 2.84 (2 H, t, J = 5.6 Hz, CH₂NMₑ₂), 3.04 (3 H, br, NCHNMₑ), 3.10 (3 H, br, NCHNMₑ), 3.45 (1 H, t, J = 10.9 Hz, CHCl), 3.98 (1 H, dd, J = 11.4, 3.1 Hz, CHCl), 4.10-4.18 (1 H, m, 1-H), 4.16 (2 H, t, J = 5.6 Hz, OCH₂CH₂NMₑ₂), 4.63 (1 H, t, J = 8.6 Hz, 2-H), 4.78 (1 H, dd, J = 10.8, 1.5 Hz, 2-H), 7.00 (1 H, d, J = 2.4 Hz, indole 6-H), 7.02 (1 H, d, J = 2.3 Hz, indole 3-H), 7.14 (1 H, d, J = 2.2 Hz, indole 4-H), 7.35 (1 H, d, J = 8.9 Hz, indole 7-H), 7.38 (1 H, t, J = 7.3 Hz, 7-H), 7.50 (1 H,
dd, $J = 8.0, 1.1$ Hz, 8-H), 7.67-7.69 (2 H, m, 9-H + NCH(N(Me)$_2$)$_2$), 7.70 (1 H, s, 4-H), 8.47 (1 H, d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 6-H), 9.59 (1 H, s, indole NH). $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ ~35.0 (NCH(NMe)$_2$), ~40.0 (NCH(NMe)$_2$), 43.30 (1-C), 45.63 (OCH$_2$CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 46.08 (CH$_2$Cl), 55.05 (2-C), 58.21 (OCH$_2$CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 66.30 (OCH$_2$CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 103.70 (indole 4-C), 104.68 (4-C), 105.97 (indole 3-C), 112.63 (indole 7-C), 117.10 (indole 6-C), 118.26 (9b-C), 121.97 (9-C), 123.64 (7-C), 125.76 (6-C), 127.26 (8-C), 127.81 (5a-C), 128.25 (indole 3a-C), 129.75 (9a-C), 130.81 (indole 7-C), 131.36 (indole 7a-C), 142.03 (3a-C), 150.91 (5-C), 153.03 (NCH(NMe)$_2$), 153.66 (indole 5-C), 160.49 (indole C=O). Ms (ES$^+$) $m/z$ 520.2375 (M + H) ($C_{20}H_{32}^{37}$ClN$_3$O$_2$ requires 520.2293), 518.2341 (M + H) ($C_{20}H_{32}^{35}$ClN$_3$O$_2$ requires 518.2323).

5.50 tert-Butyl N-(1-chloromethyl-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indol-5-yl)carbamate (135)

Compound 133 (23.8 mg, 44 µmol) was stirred in dry pyridine (0.7 mL) under N$_2$ at 0°C. Methanesulfonyl chloride (5.0 µL, 7.0 mg, 61 µmol) was added dropwise and the mixture was stirred at 0°C for 1 h. LiCl (92 mg, 2.2 mmol) was added and the mixture was warmed to 20°C and was stirred for 7 d. EtOAc was added followed by sat. aq. NaHCO$_3$. The mixture was extracted with EtOAc; the extract was washed with water and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc → EtOAc / MeOH / Et$_3$N 980:20:1) gave 135 (16.3 mg, 66%) as a yellow solid; $R_f = 0.3$ (MeOH / EtOAc 1:1); mp > 250°C; $^1$H NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (COSY / NOESY)] $\delta$ 1.55 (9 H, s, Bu'), 2.37 (6 H, s, NMe$_2$), 2.78 (2 H, t, $J = 5.7$ Hz, CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 3.47 (1 H, t, $J = 10.7$ Hz, ClCH), 3.96 (1 H, dd, $J = 11.2, 2.9$ Hz, , ClCH), 4.13 (2 H, t, $J = 5.8$ Hz, OCH$_2$CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 4.14 (1 H, m, 1-H), 4.66 (1 H, t, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 2-H), 4.82 (1 H, dd, $J = 10.7, 1.7$ Hz, 2-H), 6.91 (1 H, s, Boc NH), 7.01 (1 H, d, $J = 1.4$ Hz, indole 3-H), 7.04 (1 H, dd, $J = 8.9, 2.4$ Hz, indole 6-H), 7.14 (1 H, d, $J = 2.2$ Hz, indole 4-H), 7.35 (1 H, d, $J = 8.9$ Hz, indole 7-H), 7.45 (1 H, ddd, $J = 8.3, 7.0, 1.1$ Hz, 7-H), 7.55 (1 H, ddd, $J = 7.9, 6.8, 0.9$ Hz, 8-H), 7.77 (1 H, d, $J = 8.2$ Hz, 9-H), 7.90 (1 H, d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 6-H), 8.92 (1 H, s, 4-H), 9.42 (1 H, s, indole NH). $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ (HSQC / HMBC)] 28.28 (CMe$_3$), 43.40 (1-C), 45.84 (NMe$_2$ + CH$_2$Cl), 54.94 (2-C), 58.37 (CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 66.59 (OCH$_2$CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 80.92 (CMe$_3$), 103.64 (indole 4-C), 105.90 (indole 3-C), 111.46 (4-C), 112.59 (indole 7-C), 117.32 (indole 6-C), 120.77 (9b-C), 122.37 (6-C), 123.04 (9-C), 124.71 (5a-C), 127.23 (8-C), 128.24 (indole 3a-C), 129.68 (9a-C), 130.49 (indole 2-C), 131.32 (indole 7a-C), 134.75 (5-C), 141.66 (3a-C), 153.28 (Boc C=O), 153.86 (indole 5-C), 179.
160.41 (indole C=O); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 565.2382 (M + H) (C$_{31}$H$_{36}^{37}$ClN$_4$O$_4$ requires 565.2396), 563.2443 (M + H) (C$_{31}$H$_{36}^{35}$ClN$_4$O$_4$ requires 563.2425), 427.2157 [(M – (Boc + Cl) + H] (C$_{26}$H$_{27}$N$_4$O$_2$ requires 427.2134).

5.51 5-Amino-1-chloromethyl-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indole dihydrochloride (136)

HCl in 1,4-dioxane (4.0 M, 2mL) was added to 135 and the mixture stirred at 20°C for 2 h. The solvent and excess HCl were evaporated at 20°C. The residue was triturated with acetonitrile and Et$_2$O. Drying gave 136 (15.3 mg, 100%) as a buff solid: mp > 250°C. A sample in EtOAc was washed with sat. aq. NaHCO$_3$ and brine. Drying and evaporation gave the free base as a yellow solid: R$_f$ = 0.3 (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); mp > 250 °C; $^1$H NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO) (NOESY)] $\delta$ 2.90 (6 H, d, $J$ = 3.3 Hz, NMe$_2$), 3.55 (2 H, t, $J$ = 4.2 Hz, CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 3.77 (1 H, dd, $J$ = 11.0, 8.2 Hz, CICH), 3.99 (1 H, dd, $J$ = 8.8 Hz, indole 6-H), 4.15 (1 H, m, 1-H), 4.33 (2 H, t, $J$ = 4.9 Hz, OCH$_2$CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 4.52 (1 H, dd, $J$ = 10.8, 1.5 Hz, 2-H), 4.75 (1 H, t, $J$ = 10.7 Hz, 2-H), 7.00 (1 H, d, $J$ = 8.8 Hz, indole 6-H), 7.10 (1 H, d, $J$ = 1.7 Hz, indole 3-H), 7.26 (1 H, d, $J$ = 1.9 Hz, indole 4-H), 7.32 (1 H, t, $J$ = 7.9 Hz, 7-H), 7.45 (1 H, d, $J$ = 8.9 Hz, indole 7-H), 7.48 (1 H, t, $J$ = 7.4 Hz, 8-H), 7.75-7.80 (2 H, m, 4.9-H$_2$), 8.08 (1 H, d, $J$ = 8.5 Hz, 6-H), 11.66 (1 H, s, indole NH); $^{13}$C NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO) (HSQC / HMBC)] $\delta$ 41.40 (1-C), 42.89 (NMe$_2$), 47.51 (CICH$_2$), 55.04 (2-C), 55.67 (CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 62.70 (OCH$_2$CH$_2$NMe$_2$), 99.50 (4-C), 104.01 (indole 4-C), 105.00 (indole 3-C), 113.30 (indole 7-C), 115.54 (indole 6-C), 117.55 (9b-C), 120.67 (4a-C), 122.46 (7-C), 123.05 (9-C), 123.37 (6-C), 126.91 (8-C), 127.11 (indole 2-C), 130.01 (9a-C), 131.52 (indole 3a-C), 131.95 (indole 7a-C), 142.78 (5-C), 151.97 (indole 5-C), 157.90 (3a-C), 158.17 (C=O); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 465.1910 (M + H) (C$_{26}$H$_{28}^{37}$ClN$_4$O$_2$ requires 465.1871), 463.1874 (M + H) (C$_{26}$H$_{28}^{35}$ClN$_4$O$_2$ requires 463.1901).

![Chemical structure of 5-Amino-1-chloromethyl-3-(5-(2-dimethylaminoethoxy)indole-2-carbonyl)-2,3-dihydro-1H-benzo[e]indole dihydrochloride (136)]
5.52 (9H-Fluoren-9-yl)methyl S-(2,6-dioxopiperidin-3-yl)carbamate (157)

Method A
Dry pyridine (15 mL) was stirred with Fmoc-L-Gln-OH 155 (2.01 g, 5.46 mmol) under N₂ for 20 min. DCC (1.73 g, 8.40 mmol) in dry pyridine (5 mL) was added during 30 min and the mixture was stirred for 3 h. The reaction was filtered through Celite®. The solvent was evaporated to approximately half the volume and the mixture was filtered again (Celite®). The solvent was evaporated and water was added. The suspension was kept at 4°C for 1 h. The suspension was filtered. Aq. HCl (6 M, 50 mL) was added and the suspension was extracted with EtOAc. The extract was washed with brine and dried. The solvent was evaporated to yield 157 (914 mg, 48%) as a white solid with properties as below.

Method B
Fmoc-L-Gln-OH 155 (1.55 g, 4.2 mmol) was suspended in dry THF (20 mL) and placed under N₂. Dry pyridine (2.0 mL) was added and the mixture was stirred at 0°C. Trifluoroacetic anhydride (2.0 mL) was added dropwise during 45 min (keeping the temperature ≤ 5°C). The mixture was then stirred at 0°C for 6 h. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was suspended in water and EtOAc. Extraction with EtOAc, drying and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:1 → EtOAc) gave 157 (867 mg, 59 %) as a white solid:

R_f = 0.7 (EtOAc); mp 125-127°C; IR ν_max 3290 (NH), 3185(NH), 3083(NH), 1690 (C=O); ^1H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] δ 1.98-2.04 (2 H, m, Gln γ-H₂), 2.56 (1 H, m, Gln β-H), 2.80 (1 H, dt, J = 17.6, 6.2 Hz, β-H), 4.32 (1 H, t, J = 6.7 Hz, fluorene 9-H), 4.38-4.40 (3 H, m, Fmoc-CH₂, Gln α-H), 7.40 (2 H, t, J = 7.4 Hz, fluorene 2,7-H₂), 7.48 (2 H, t, J = 7.4 Hz, fluorene 3,6-H₂), 7.72 (1 H, d, J = 8.7 Hz, Fmoc NH), 7.78 (2 H, d, J = 7.3 Hz, fluorene 4,5-H₂), 8.02 (2 H, d, J = 7.5 Hz, fluorene 1,8-H₂), 10.87 (1 H, brs, NH). ^13C NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 24.28 (Gln γ-C), 30.94 (Gln β-C), 46.58 (fluorene 9-C), 50.71 (Gln α-C), 65.63 (Fmoc CH₂), 120.13 (fluorene 1,8-C₂), 125.20 (fluorene 4,5-C₂), 127.07 (fluorene 2,7-C₂), 127.63 (fluorene 3,6-C₂), 140.73 (fluorene 4a,4b-C₂), 143.81 (fluorene 8a,9a-C₂), 156.08 (C=O), 172.97 (C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 373.1174 (M + Na) (C₂₀H₁₈N₂NaO₄ requires 373.1164), 351.1347 (M + H) (C₂₀H₁₉N₂O₄ requires 351.1345).
5.53 S-2-(Benzyloxycarbonylamino)-4-cyanobutanoic acid (163)

Cbz-L-Gln-OH 162 (4.11 g, 14.3 mmol) in dry pyridine (15 mL) was treated with DCC (3.03 g, 14.7 mmol) in dry pyridine (15 mL), added in portions during 30 min. The mixture was stirred for 16 h and was then filtered through Celite®. Most of the solvent was evaporated and the suspension was filtered again.

The remaining solvent was evaporated. Water was added to the residue followed by aq. HCl (2 M) until the pH was ca. 1. The mixture was extracted with EtOAc (3 ×) and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc) gave 163 (3.06 g, 82%) as a colourless oil: Rf = 0.3 (EtOAc); IR νmax 3320 cm⁻¹ (NH, OH), 2251 cm⁻¹ (C=O), 1710 cm⁻¹ (C=O); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 2.06 (1 H, m, 3-H), 2.29 (1 H, m, 3-H), 2.44 (2 H, t, J = 6.6 Hz, 4-H₂), 4.43 (1 H, t, J = 6.7 Hz, 2-H), 5.10 (2 H, s, PhCH₂), 5.62 (1 H, d, J = 7.2 Hz, NH), 7.34 (5 H, m, Ph-H₃); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HMBC / HMQC)] δ 13.57 (4-C), 21.01 (3-C), 52.62 (2-C), 67.46 (PhCH₂), 118.65 (CN), 128.14 (Ph 2,6-C₂), 128.37 (Ph 3,5-C₂), 128.58 (Ph 4-C), 135.68 (Ph 1-C), 156.24 (N=C=O), 174.01 (CO₂H); MS (ES⁺) m/z 285.0837 (M + Na) (C₁₃H₁₄N₂NaO₄ requires 285.0851), 263.1022 (M + H) (C₁₃H₁₅N₂O₄ requires 263.1031).

5.54 tert-Butyl N-(N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (168)

Cbz-L-Leu-OH 167 (670 mg, 2.5 mmol) and D-Ser(OBu')-OMe (1.00 g, 2.5 mmol) were stirred with benzotriazol-1-yl-oxytrypyrrolidinophosphonium hexafluorophosphate (PyBOP) (1.60 g, 3.0 mmol) and Et₃N (1.01 g, 10 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (30 mL) for 24 h. The solution was washed with water, aq. citric acid (5%), aq. NaHCO₃ and water. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 7:3) afforded 168 (1.00 g, 95%) as a white powder: mp 83-84°C; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.94 (6 H, d, J = 6.0 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 1.18 (9 H, s, Bu'), 1.52 (1 H, dd, J = 16.5, 8.5 H, Leu β-H), 1.63-1.72 (2 H, m, Leu β,γ-H₂), 3.55 (1 H, dd, J = 9.2, 2.7 Hz, Ser β-H), 3.73 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.79 (1 H, dd, J = 9.2, 2.7 Hz, Ser β-H), 4.25 (1 H, m, Leu α-H), 4.68 (1 H, td, J = 8.3, 2.7 Hz, Ser α-H), 5.12 (2 H, s, PhCH₂), 5.21 (1 H, d, J = 7.3 Hz, NH), 6.77 (1 H, d, J = 7.3 Hz, NH), 7.35 (5 H, s, Ph-H₃); ¹³C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HMBC / HMQC)] δ 22.85 (Leu Me), 22.85 (Leu Me), 24.70 (Leu γ-C), 27.25 (CMe₃), 41.78 (Leu β-C), 52.39 (OMe), 52.75 (Ser α-C), 53.50 (Leu α-C), 61.70 (Ser β-C), 67.04 (PhCH₂), 72.83 (CMe₃), 128.06 (Ph), 128.16 (Ph), 128.52 (Ph), 136.19 (Ph 1-C), 182
170.65 (Ser C=O), 171.13 (Cbz C=O), 171.81 (Leu C=O); MS (ES\(^+\)) m/z 445.2314 (M + Na) 
(C\(_{22}\)H\(_{34}\)N\(_2\)NaO\(_6\) requires 445.2314), 423.2455 (M + H) (C\(_{22}\)H\(_{35}\)N\(_2\)O\(_6\) requires 423.2495).

5.55 tert-Butyl N-(L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (169)

Compound 168 (280 mg, 0.66 mmol) was stirred vigorously under H\(_2\) with Pd/C (10%, 30 mg) in MeOH (30 mL) for 16 h. Filtration (Celite\textsuperscript{®}) and evaporation gave 169 (250 mg, quant.) as a white powder: mp 95-96°C; \(^1\)H NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \(\delta\) 0.92 (3 H, t, \(J = 6.9\) Hz, Leu Me), 0.93 (3 H, t, \(J = 6.9\) Hz, Leu Me), 1.11 (9 H, s, Bu\(^t\)), 1.39 (1 H, d heptet, \(J = 9.1, 4.1\) Hz, Leu \(\gamma\)-H), 1.53 (2 H, br, NH\(_2\)), 1.62-1.77 (2 H, m, Leu \(\beta\)-H\(_2\)), 3.39 (1 H, dd, \(J = 9.3, 4.1\) Hz, Leu \(\alpha\)-H), 3.53 (1 H, dd, \(J = 9.1, 3.3\) Hz, Ser \(\beta\)-H), 3.71 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.80 (1 H, dd, \(J = 9.1, 3.0\) Hz, Ser \(\beta\)-H), 4.66 (1 H, td, \(J = 8.5, 3.0\) Hz, Ser \(\alpha\)-H), 7.78 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.0\) Hz, NH); \(^1^3\)C NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \(\delta\) 21.50 (Leu Me), 23.44 (Leu Me), 24.88 (Leu \(\gamma\)-C), 27.39 (CMe\(_2\)), 44.03 (Leu \(\beta\)-C), 52.37 (OMe), 52.58 (Ser \(\alpha\)-C), 53.61 (Leu \(\alpha\)-C), 62.12 (Ser \(\beta\)-C), 73.42 (CMe\(_3\)), 171.17 (Ser C=O), 175.71 (Leu C=O).

5.56 tert-Butyl N-(N-(S-2-phenylmethoxycarbonylamino-4-cyanobutanoyl)-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (170)

Compound 163 (900 mg, 3.43 mmol) and L-Leu-D-Ser(Bu\(^t\))-OMe 169 (1.00 g, 3.43 mmol) were stirred with 2-((1H-7-azabenzotriazol-1-yl)-1,1,3,3-tetramethyluronium hexafluorophosphate (HATU) (1.43 g, 3.77 mmol) and Pr\(_2\)NEt (885 mg, 6.86 mmol) in CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) (80 mL) for 20 h. The solution was washed with water, aq. citric acid (5%), aq. NaHCO\(_3\) and water. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc) gave 170 (1.14 g, 77%) as a white powder: mp 95-96°C; \(^1\)H NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \(\delta\) 0.89 (3 H, d, \(J = 6.3\) Hz, Leu Me), 0.92 (3 H, d, \(J = 6.3\) Hz, Leu Me), 1.12 (9 H, s, Bu\(^t\)), 1.53 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.8\) Hz, Leu \(\beta\)-H), 1.61-1.68 (2 H, m, Leu \(\beta\)-H\(_2\)), 2.03 (1 H, ddd, \(J = 13.6, 7.6, 5.8\) Hz, Gln(CN) \(\beta\)-H), 2.17 (1 H, ddd, \(J = 13.6, 7.6, 5.8\) Hz, Gln(CN) \(\beta\)-H), 2.40 (2 H, t, \(J = 7.6\) Hz, Gln(CN) \(\gamma\)-H\(_2\)), 3.55 (1 H, dd, \(J = 9.0, 3.1\) Hz, Ser \(\beta\)-H), 3.71 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.77 (1 H, dd, \(J = 9.0, 3.1\) Hz, Ser \(\beta\)-H), 4.45 (1 H, dd, \(J = 13.7, 7.5\) Hz, Gln(CN) \(\alpha\)-H), 4.55 (1 H, dd, \(J = 14.0, 7.5\) Hz, Leu \(\alpha\)-H), 4.65
Compound 170 (820 mg, 1.54 mmol) was stirred vigorously under H₂ with Pd/C (10%, 80 mg) in MeOH (80 mL) for 16 h. Filtration (Celite®) and evaporation gave 171 (640 mg, quant.) as a pale yellow oil: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.94 (3 H, d, J = 6.2 Hz, Leu Me), 0.96 (3 H, d, J = 6.2 Hz, Leu Me), 1.14 (9 H, s, Bu'), 1.57 (1 H, m, Leu β-H), 1.65 (1 H, sextet, J = 6.2 Hz, Leu γ-H), 1.72 (1 H, m, Leu β-H), 1.88 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.13 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.54 (2 H, dt, J = 10.2, 6.6 Hz, Gln(CN) γ-H), 2.55 (2 H, dt, J = 10.2, 6.6 Hz, Gln(CN) γ-H), 3.49 (1 H, dd, J = 7.4, 5.8 Hz, Gln(CN) α-H), 3.56 (1 H, dd, J = 9.0, 3.5 Hz, Ser β-H), 3.74 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.79 (1 H, dd, J = 8.9, 3.1, Ser β-H), 4.51 (1 H, ddd, J = 14.4, 8.6, 2.4 Hz, Leu α-H), 4.65 (1 H, dt, J = 8.2, 3.1 Hz, Ser α-H), 6.88 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, Ser NH), 7.47 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, Leu NH); ¹³C-NMR [(CDCl₃) (HMBC / HMQC)] δ 13.98 (Gln(CN) γ-C), 22.14 (Leu Me), 22.74 (Leu Me), 27.21 (CMₑ₃), 30.80 (Gln(CN) β-C), 40.76 (Leu β-C), 51.23 (Leu α-C), 52.41 (OMe), 52.83 (Ser α-C), 53.92 (Gln(CN) α-C), 61.58 (Ser β-C), 73.42 (CMₑ₃), 119.41 (CN), 170.69 (Ser C=O), 171.63 (Leu C=O), 173.72 (Gln(CN) C=O).
5.58 tert-Butyl N-(N-(S-2-((N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)amino)-4-cyanobutanoyl)-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (172)

Cbz-L-Leu-OH 167 (210 mg, 0.80 mmol) and 171 (320 mg, 0.80 mmol) were stirred with benzotriazol-1-yl-oxytripyrrolidinophosphonium hexafluorophosphate (PyBOP) (500 mg, 0.96 mmol) and Et$_3$N (323 mg, 3.20 mmol) in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (15 mL) for 2 d. The solution was washed with water, aq. citric acid (5%), aq. NaHCO$_3$ and water. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 7:3) afforded 172 (390 mg, 75%) as a white powder: mp 152-154°C; IR (Nujol) $\nu$$_{max}$ 3304, 2239, 1758, 1705, 1629 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ 0.91 (6 H, d, $J$ = 6.2 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 0.94 (6 H, d, $J$ = 6.2 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 1.14 (9 H, s, Bu), 1.51-1.70 (6 H, m, 2 × Leu $\gamma$-H + 2 × Leu $\beta$-H), 2.02 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) $\alpha$-H), 2.23 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) $\beta$-H), 2.39 (2 H, t, $J$ = 7.6 Hz, Gln(CN) $\gamma$-H), 3.57 (1 H, dd, $J$ = 8.9, 3.1, Ser $\beta$-H), 3.73 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.79 (1 H, dd, $J$ = 38.9, 3.1, Ser $\beta$-H), 4.19 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) $\alpha$-H), 4.53 (1 H, dd, $J$ = 14.0, 7.6 Hz, Leu $\alpha$-H), 4.60 (1 H, m, Leu $\alpha$-H), 4.65 (1H, dt, $J$ = 8.0, 3.2 Hz, Ser $\alpha$-H), 5.12 (2 H, s, PhCH$_2$), 5.30 (1 H, d, $J$ = 7.6 Hz, NH), 6.80-6.89 (3 H, br m, 3 × NH), 7.35 (5 H, s, Ph-H$_5$); $^{13}$C NMR [(CDCl$_3$) (HMBC / HMQC)] $\delta$ 13.51 (Gln(CN) $\gamma$-C), 21.82 (Leu Me), 22.12 (Leu Me), 22.75 (Leu Me), 22.91 (Leu Me), 24.71 (2 × Leu $\gamma$-C), 27.25 (CMe$_3$), 28.07 (Gln(CN) $\beta$-C), 40.62 (2 × Leu $\beta$-C), 51.65 (Leu $\alpha$-C), 51.91 (Leu $\alpha$-C), 52.48 (OMe), 52.99 (Ser $\alpha$-C), 53.72 (Gln(CN) $\alpha$-C), 61.53 (Ser $\beta$-C), 67.28 (PhCH$_2$), 73.48 (CMe$_3$), 119.28 (CN), 128.09 (Ph), 128.28 (Ph), 128.57 (Ph), 136.04 (Ph 1-C), 156.46 (Cbz C=O), 169.79 (Ser C=O Ser), 170.60 (Gln(CN) C=O), 171.28 (Leu C=O), 172.56 (Leu C=O); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 668.3610 (M + Na) (C$_{33}$H$_{51}$N$_5$Na$_1$O$_8$ requires 668.3635).

5.59 tert-Butyl N-(N-(N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)-L-glutamyl)-L-leucyl-D-serine methyl ester (173)

Aq. H$_2$O$_2$ (35%, 0.30 mL) was added to 172 (20 mg, 30 µmol) in aq. NaOH (0.5 M, 2.7 mL), followed by aq. NaOH (2.0 M, 0.2 mL). The mixture was stirred for 1 h at room temperature. The mixture was cooled to 0°C and the pH was adjusted to 2.0 with aq. HCl (1.0 M).
Extraction (CH₂Cl₂, thrice), drying and evaporation gave 173 (18.8 mg, 90%) as a white powder: mp 193-194°C; IR (Nujol) 3292, 1623, 1540 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.82 (6 H, d, J = 6.7 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 0.86 (6 H, d, J = 6.7 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 1.09 (9 H, s, Bu'), 1.39-1.45 (4 H, m, 2 × Leu β-H₂), 1.59-1.60 (2 H, m, 2 × Leu γ-H), 1.75 (1 H, m, Gln β-H), 1.84-1.90 (1 H, m, Gln β-H), 2.08 (2 H, t, J = 7.2 Hz, Gln γ-H), 3.33 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.49 (1 H, dd, J = 9.0, 3.9 Hz, Ser-β-H), 3.58 (1 H, dd, J = 9.4, 5.5 Hz, β-H), 4.03 (1 H, m Leu α-H), 4.25 (1 H, m, Gln α-H), 4.33 (1 H, dd, J = 7.8, 3.9 Hz, Ser-α-H), 4.40 (1 H, m, Leu α-H), 5.01 (1 H, d, J = 13.0 Hz, PhCH), 5.02 (1 H, d, J = 13.0 Hz, PhCH), 6.74 (1 H, br, Gln γ-CONH), 7.20 (1 H, br, Gln γ-CONH), 7.31 (1 H, d, J = 8.6 Hz, Gln α-NH), 7.35 (5 H, s, Ph-H₅), 7.37 (1 H, d, J = 8.8 Hz, Leu NH), 7.93 (1 H, d, J = 9.0 Hz, Leu NH), 7.97 (1 H, d, J = 7.8 Hz, Ser NH); ¹³C NMR [(CD₃OD) (HMBC / HMQC)] δ 21.43 (Leu Me), 21.63 (Leu Me), 23.05 (2 × Leu Me), 24.04 (Leu γ-H), 24.16 (Leu γ-H), 27.13 (CMe₂), 27.79 (Gln β-C), 31.47 (Gln γ-C), 40.69 (Leu β-C), 41.18 (Leu β-C), 50.78 (Leu α-C), 51.87 (OMe), 52.00 (Gln α-C), 52.74 (Ser α-C), 53.07 (Leu α-C), 61.55 (Ser β-C), 65.37 (PhCH₂), 72.66 (CMe₃), 127.63 (Ph 2,6-C₂), 127.76 (Ph 4-C), 128.34 (Ph 3,5-C₂), 137.04 (Ph 1-C), 155.95 (Cbz C=O), 170.86 (Ser C=O), 171.55 (Gln α-C=O), 171.79 (Leu C=O), 172.31 (Leu C=O), 173.77 (Gln γ-C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 664.3968 (M + H) (C₃₃H₄₅N₅O₉ requires 664.3916).

5.60 N-(N-(S-2-((N-Phenylnmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucyl)amino)-4-cyanobutanoyl)-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (174)

Compound 172 (33 mg, 51 µmol) was stirred with CF₃CO₂H (1.0 mL) and CH₂Cl₂ (1.0 mL) for 1 h. Evaporation gave 174 (41 mg, quant.) as a pale yellow oil: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.89 (6 H, d, J = 6.9 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 0.90 (6 H, d, J = 6.9 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 1.55-1.70 (6 H, m, 2 × Leu β-H₂ + 2 × Leu γ-H), 1.89-2.19 (2 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H₂), 2.35-2.42 (2 H, m, Gln(CN) γ-H₂), 3.72 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.91 (1 H, d, J = 11.0 Hz, Ser β-H), 4.05 (1H, dd, J = 12.1, 3.5 Hz, Ser β-H), 4.26 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) α-H), 4.60 (2 H, s, PhCH₂), 4.70 (1 H, dd, J = 11.3, 3.3 Hz, Leu α-H), 4.99-5.16 (2 H, m, Leu α-H + Ser α-H), 5.82 (1 H, d, J = 5.2 Hz, NH), 7.32 (5 H, m, Ph-H₅), 7.59 (1 H, br, NH), 7.78 (1 H, br, NH), 7.91 (1 H, br, NH); MS (ES⁺) m/z 588.3053 (M - H) (C₂₉H₃₂N₅O₈ requires 588.3033).
5.61 Methyl R-2,2-dimethyl-3-(S-N-(4-cyano-2-(N-phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-leucylamino)butanoyl)-L-leucyl)oxazolidine-4-carboxylate (175)

Compound 174 (32 mg, 54 μmol) was boiled under reflux with 2,2-dimethoxypropane (28 mg, 0.27 mmol) and TsOH (1.2 mg, 6 μmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (2.0 mL) under N₂ for 19 h. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:4) gave 175 (7.5 mg, 22%) as a pale yellow oil: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.88 (6 H, d, J = 6.0 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 0.91 (6 H, d, J = 5.5 Hz, 2 × Leu Me), 1.49 (3 H, s, Dmo 2-Me), 1.52-1.57 (4 H, m, 2 × Leu β-H₂), 1.59-1.69 (2 H, m, 2 × Leu γ-H), 1.64 (3 H, s, Dmo 2-Me), 1.98 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.14 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.30 (2 H, t, J = 7.2 Hz, Gln(CN) γ-H₂), 2.72 (1 H, t, J = 2.5 Hz, α-H), 3.78 (3 H, s, OMe), 4.07-4.25 (3 H, m, Dmo 4,5-H₃), 4.34 (1 H, t, J = 7.9 Hz, α-H), 4.61 (1 H, dd, J = 11.6, 5.8 Hz, α-H), 5.04 (1 H, d, J = 5.8 Hz, NH), 5.10 (2 H, s, PhCH₂), 5.59 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, NH), 6.85 (1 H, d, J = 8.3 Hz, NH), 7.33 (5 H, s, Ph -H₅); ¹³C NMR [(CD₃)OD] (HMBC / HMQC) δ 13.29 (Gln(CN) γ-C), 21.21 (Leu Me), 21.83 (Leu Me), 22.85 (Dmo 2-Me), 22.87 (Leu Me), 23.43 (Leu Me), 24.38 (Leu γ-C), 24.68 (Leu γ-C), 24.85 (Dmo 2-Me), 27.81 (Gln(CN) β-C), 40.42 (Leu β-C), 40.34 (Leu β-C), 50.73 (α-C), 51.64 (α-C), 52.82 (OMe), 53.72 (Dmo 5-C), 59.46 (α-C), 67.07 (Dmo 4-C), 67.26 (PhCH₂), 96.73 (Dmo 2-C), 118.99 (CN), 128.15 (Ph 2,6-C₂), 128.28 (Ph 4-C), 128.55 (Ph 3,5-C₂), 136.07 (Ph 1-C), 156.57 (C=O), 169.57 (C=O), 169.98 (C=O), 169.98 (C=O), 171.05 (C=O), 172.57 (C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 652.3282 (M + Na) (C₃₂H₄₇N₅NaO₈ requires 652.3322), 630.3464 (M + H) (C₃₂H₄₈N₅O₈ requires 630.3502).

5.62 N-(N-(S-4-Cyano-2-(phenylmethoxycarbonylamino)butanoyl)-L-leucyl)-D-serine methyl ester (176)

Compound 170 (200 mg, 0.37 mmol) was stirred with CF₃CO₂H (2.0 mL) and CH₂Cl₂ (2 mL) for 2 h. Evaporation afforded 176 (220 mg, quant.) as a yellow oil: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.87 (3 H, d, J = 5.2 Hz, Leu Me), 0.88 (3 H, d, J = 5.2 Hz, Leu Me), 1.55-1.60 (3 H, m, Leu β,γ-H₂), 1.95 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.14 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.40 (2 H, t, J = 6.9 Hz, Gln(CN) γ-H₂), 3.70 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.86 (1 H, dd, J =
11.3, 6.0 Hz, Ser β-H), 3.99 (1 H, ddd, J = 11.3, 6.0, 3.6 Hz, Ser β-H), 4.43 (1 H, t, J = 6.9 Hz, Gln(CN) α-H), 4.57-4.72 (2 H, m, Leu α-H + Ser α-H), 5.07 (2 H, s, PhCH₂), 6.29 (2 H, br, 2 × NH), 7.31 (5 H, s, Ph-Hs), 7.55 (1 H, t, J = 6.0 Hz, OH); 13C NMR (CDCl₃) δ 13.46, 14.12, 21.64, 22.69, 24.78, 28.75, 40.74, 50.97, 52.40, 53.24, 67.27, 119.01, 128.00, 128.12, 128.27, 128.53, 135.84, 156.08, 170.15, 172.92; MS (ES⁺) m/z 477.2327 (M + H) (C₂₃H₃₃N₄O₇ requires 477.2349).

5.63 Methyl R,2,2-dimethyl-3-(S-N-(4-cyano-2-(phenylmethoxycarbonylamino)-butanoyl)-L-leucyl)oxazolidine-4-carboxylate (177).

Compound 176 (220 mg, 0.46 mmol) was boiled under reflux with 2,2-dimethoxypropane (240 mg, 2.3 mmol) and TsOH (9.6 mg, 50 µmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (5.0 mL) under N₂ for 19 h. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:4) gave 177 (120 mg, 50%) as a pale yellow oil:

1H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.81 (3 H, d, J = 5.8 Hz, Leu Me), 0.90 (3 H, d, J = 6.3 Hz, Leu Me), 1.54 (3 H, s, Dmo 2-Me), 1.44-1.64 (3 H, m, Leu β,γ-H₃), 1.66 (3 H, s, Dmo 2-Me), 1.92 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.18 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.40 (2 H, t, J = 7.0 Hz, Gln(CN) γ-H₂), 3.80 (3 H, s, OMe), 4.18 (2 H, dd, J = 9.4, 6.2 Hz, Dmo 5-H), 4.24 (1 H, d, J = 9.4 Hz, Dmo 5-H), 4.32 (1 H, t, J = 8.6 Hz, Leu α-H), 4.37 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) α-H), 5.05 (1 H, d, J = 5.8 Hz, Dmo 4-H), 5.11 (2 H, s, PhCH₂), 5.49 (1 H, d, J = 7.4 Hz, CbzNH), 6.60 (1 H, d, J = 6.6 Hz, Leu NH), 7.35 (5 H, s, Ph-Hs); 13C NMR [(CDCl₃) (HMBC / HMQC)] δ 13.31 (Gln(CN) γ-C), 21.10 (Leu Me), 22.90 (Dmo 2-Me), 23.43 (Leu Me), 24.39 (Leu γ-C), 24.88 (Dmo 2-Me), 28.52 (Gln(CN) β-C), 40.39 (Leu β-C), 50.90 (Gln(CN) α-C), 52.82 (OMe), 53.20 (Leu α-C), 59.44 (Dmo 4-C), 67.10 (Dmo 5-C), 67.42 (PhCH₂), 96.76 (Dmo 2-C), 118.70 (CN), 128.17 (Ph 2,6-C₂), 128.39 (Ph 4-C), 128.60 (Ph 3,5-C₂), 135.78 (Ph 1-C), 155.83 (Cbz C=O), 169.56 (Gln C=O), 170.10 (Leu C=O), 171.01 (Dmo C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 539.2450 (M + Na) (C₂₆H₃₆N₄O₇Na requires 539.2476).
5.64 Methyl S-2-(benzyloxycarbonylamino)-4-cyanobutanamido)propanoate (178)

Cbz-L-Gln(CN)-OH 163 (3.06 g, 11.7 mmol) was stirred with DMF (200 mL) and Pr$_2$NEt (12 mL, 8.90 g, 69 mmol) and PyBOP (9.10 g, 17.5 mmol) for 5 min. L-Ala-OMe.HCl (2.50 g, 17.9 mmol) was added and the mixture was stirred for 3 d. The DMF was evaporated and the residue was extracted with EtOAc. The extract was washed with aq. NaHCO$_3$ (5%) and brine, and was dried. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:1 → EtOAc) gave 178 (3.52 g, 87%) as a white solid: R$_f$ = 0.9 (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); mp 157-158 °C; [α]$^D$-$10.2^\circ$ (c = 1.6%, DMF); IR $\nu$$_{max}$ 3303 (NH), 2244 (C≡N), 1750 (C=O), 1693 (C=O), 1657 (C=O); $^1$H NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO] $\delta$ 1.29 (3 H, d, $J$ = 7.5 Hz, Ala Me), 1.82 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 1.96 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.52 (2 H, m, Gln(CN) γ-H$_2$), 3.62 (3 H, s, OMe), 4.11 (1 H, td, $J$ = 8.6, 4.8 Hz, Gln(CN) α-H), 4.26 (1 H, qn, $J$ = 7.3 Hz, Ala α-H), 5.03 (2 H, s, PhCH$_2$), 7.34 (5 H, m, Ph-H$_5$), 7.52 (1 H, d, $J$ = 8.0 Hz Gln(CN) NH), 8.50 (1 H, d, $J$ = 7.0 Hz, Ala NH). $^{13}$C NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO) (HSQC / HMBC) $\delta$ 13.14 (Gln(CN) γ-C), 16.68 (Ala -Me), 27.63 (Gln(CN) β-C), 47.67 (Ala α-C), 51.95 (OMe), 53.03 (Gln(CN) α-C), 65.57 (PhCH$_2$), 119.94 (CN), 127.76 (Ph 2,6-C$_2$), 127.85 (Ph 4-C), 128.36 (Ph 3,5-C$_2$), 136.87 (Ph 1-C), 155.93 (Cbz C=O), 170.79 (Gln(CN) C=O), 172.99 (ester C=O); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 370.1518 (M + Na) (C$_{17}$H$_{21}$N$_3$NaO$_5$ requires 370.1379).

5.65 N-(S-4-Cyano-2-(N-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-L-alanyl)butanoyl)-L-alanine (180)

Cbz-L-Gln(CN)-L-Ala-OMe 178 (357 mg, 1.03 mmol) was stirred vigorously with Pd/C (10% 36 mg) in MeOH (25 mL) under hydrogen for 2 h. Filtration (Celite$^\circledR$) and evaporation gave N-(S-2-amino-4-cyanobutanoyl)-L-alanine 179. This was added to Boc-L-Ala-OH (395 mg, 2.1 mmol), Pr$_2$NET (0.72 mL, 533 mg, 4.1 mmol) and HATU (822 mg, 2.2 mmol) in DMF (25 mL). The mixture was stirred for 2 h and the solvent was evaporated. The residue in EtOAc was washed with aq. NaHCO$_3$ (5%), water and brine. Evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc / petroleum ether 1:1 → EtOAc) gave 180 (252 mg, 64%) as a white solid: mp 175-176 °C; [α]$^D$+$-24.6^\circ$ (c = 0.80%, DMF); IR $\nu$$_{max}$ 3318 (NH), 3279 (NH), 2250 (C≡N), 1673 (C=O); $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$) $\delta$ 1.37 (3 H, d, $J$ = 7.1 Hz, Ala Me), 1.41 (3 H, d, $J$ = 7.3 Hz, Ala Me), 1.43 (9 H, s, Bu$^t$), 2.02 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.26 (1 H, m, Gln(CN) β-H), 2.46 (2 H, m, Gln(CN) γ-H$_2$), 3.71 (3 H,
s, OMe), 4.11 (1 H, m, Ala α-H), 4.51 (1 H, qn, J = 7.2 Hz, Ala α-H), 4.62 (1 H, td, J = 7.5, 5.5 Hz, Gln (CN) α-H), 5.35 (1 H, br, BocNH), 7.01 (1 H, d, J = 7.2 Hz, Ala-OMe NH), 7.07 (1 H, d, J = 8.1 Hz, Gln(CN) NH); 13C NMR [(CDCl3) (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 13.33 (Gln(CN) γ-C), 17.39 (Ala Me), 17.88 (Ala Me), 28.20 (CMes), 28.34 (Gln(CN) β-C), 48.20 (Ala α-C), 50.46 (Ala α-C), 51.62 (Gln(CN) α-C), 52.41 (OMe), 80.25 (CMes), 119.28 (C=N), 155.63 (Boc C=O), 169.79 (Gln(CN) C=O), 172.84 (N-terminal Ala C=O), 173.42 (C-terminal Ala C=O): MS (ES+) m/z 407.2052 (M + Na) (C17H28N4NaO6 requires 407.1907).

5.66 N-(N-(tert-Butoxycarbonyl)-L-alanyl)-L-glutaminyl-L-alanine (181).

Boc-L-Ala-L-Gln(CN)-L-Ala-OMe 180 (1.00 g, 2.6 mmol) in MeOH (50 mL) at 0°C was stirred with aq. H2O2 (35% w/w, 1.6 mL, 18.2 mmol) and aq. NaOH (1.0 M, 2.6 mL, 2.6 mmol) for 6 h. The reaction was quenched by addition of aq. Na2S2O3 (20%, 30 mL) and the methanol was evaporated. The residue was extracted with EtOAc; the organic solution was washed with brine and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc → EtOAc / MeOH 4:1) gave 181 (243 mg, 23%) as a white solid: mp 193-194°C; [α]18D -26.4° (c = 0.85%, DMF); IR νmax 3420 (NH), 3306 (NH), 1747 (C=O), 1660 (C=O); 1H NMR [(CD3)2SO] δ 1.16 (3 H, brd, J = 7.0 Hz, N-terminal Ala Me), 1.27 (3 H, d, J = 7.5 Hz, C-terminal Ala Me), 1.37 (9 H, s, Bu'), 1.72 (1 H, m, Gln β-H), 1.86 (1 H, m, Gln β-H), 2.10 (2 H, t, J = 7.0 Hz, Gln γ-H2), 3.62 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.96 (1 H, qn, J = 7.1 Hz, N-terminal Ala α-H), 4.28-4.35 (2 H, m, C-terminal Ala α-H + Gln α-H), 6.75 (1 H, s, Gln δ-NH), 6.97 (1 H, d, J = 7.3 Hz, N-terminal Ala-NH), 7.21 (1 H, s, Gln δ-NH), 7.80 (1 H, d, J = 8.0 Hz, Gln α-NH), 8.35 (1 H, d, J = 6.5 Hz, C-terminal Ala NH); 13C NMR [(CD3)2SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 16.79 (C-terminal Ala-Me), 18.05 (N-terminal Ala-Me), 28.17 (CMes + Gln β-C), 31.13 (Gln γ-C), 47.50 (C-terminal Ala α-C), 49.73 (N-terminal Ala α-C), 51.52 (Gln α-C), 51.86 (OMe), 78.11 (CMes), 155.09 (Boc C=O), 171.10 (Gln α-C=O), 172.48 (N-terminal Ala C=O), 172.86 (C-terminal Ala C=O), 173.72 (Gln δ-C=O); 15N NMR [(CD3)2SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 63.83 (BocN), 79.33 (Gln γ-CONH2), 85.20 (Gln α-N), 91.03 (C-terminal Ala-N); MS (ES+) m/z 425.2166 (M + Na) (C17H30N4NaO7 requires 425.2012), 403.2183 (M + H) (C17H31N4O7 requires 403.2193).
5.67 N-Phenylmethoxycarbonyl-L-glutamic acid (188)

Aq. H$_2$O$_2$ (35%, 1.5 mL) was added to 163 (110 mg, 0.42 mmol) in aq. NaOH (0.5 M, 15 mL), followed by aq. NaOH (2 M, 1.0 mL) and the mixture was stirred for 30 min. The mixture was cooled to 0ºC and the pH was adjusted to 2.0 with aq. HCl (1.0 M). Extraction (CH$_2$Cl$_2$, thrice), drying and evaporation gave 188 (120 mg, quant.) as a colourless viscous oil: IR (liquid film) $\nu_{\text{max}}$ 3290, 1697 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CD$_3$OD) $\delta$ 1.96 (1 H, m, $\beta$-H), 2.19 (1 H, m, $\beta$-H), 2.32 (1 H, m, $\gamma$-H), 2.40 (1 H, m, $\gamma$-H), 4.18 (1 H, m, $\alpha$-H), 4.88 (2 H, s, PhCH$_2$), 5.09 (1 H, br, OH), 7.32 (5 H, s, Ph-H$_5$); MS (ES$^+$) m/z 282.1023 (M + H) (C$_{13}$H$_{16}$NO$_6$ requires 282.0972).

5.68 Solid phase peptide synthesis

The Kaiser test was used to test for the presence / absence of free amino groups during deprotection or coupling. The resin is treated with ninhydrin in ethanol, phenol in ethanol and potassium cyanide in pyridine. A positive test (presence of free amino group) is indicated by a purple colour. To determine the resin loading after coupling the first amino-acid, the resin is treated with piperidine in DMF (1:4) (4 ×) for 3 min each time to cleave the Fmoc group. The absorbance of the dibenzofulvene-piperidine adduct is recorded at 301 nm against DMF and the loading of the first amino-acid on the resin calculated using Beer Lambert equation:

$$A = C \cdot \varepsilon \cdot L, \ C = A / \varepsilon, \ C = n / v, \ n = (v \times 10^3) \times C$$

Therefore loading of resin (mol) = $[(A_{301} \times v \times 10^3) / (\varepsilon_{301})] \times F$

Where $A_{301}$ is the absorbance at 301 nm minus the control reading, $V$ is the volume (mL), $\varepsilon_{301}$ is the extinction coefficient at 301 nm (7800 M$^{-1}$ cm$^{-1}$) and $F$ is the dilution factor.

Peptides were synthesised using standard Fmoc solid-phase peptide synthetic protocols. The resin used was 2-chlorotrityl chloride polystyrene. Before starting a peptide synthesis, the resin was swollen in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ for about 5 min. Loading of the resin involved reaction with the appropriate N$^\alpha$-Fmoc amino-acids (2 - 4 equiv.) in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ in the presence of $^1$Pr$_2$NEt (6 equiv.) for 2 h. The mixture was rinsed with DMF (5 ×) and CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (5 ×) followed by treatment with CH$_2$Cl$_2$ / MeOH / Pr$_2$NEt (17:2:1) (3 × 15 min) to cap unreacted resin. Washing with DMF (5 ×) and CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (5 ×) followed by Fmoc deprotection by treating resin with piperidine in DMF (1:4) (4 ×) for 3 min each time, yielded the desired loaded resin. Determination of the absorbance of the dibenzofulvene-piperidine adduct allowed estimation...
of the percentage loading of the resin. The peptide chains were then assembled by sequential couplings of preactivated N\(^\alpha\)-Fmoc amino-acids (2 - 3 equiv.) for 2 h. The preactivation was carried out manually in DMF by treatment with benzotriazol-1-yl-oxytrispyrrolidinophosphonium hexafluorophosphate (PyBOP) (2 equiv.) and Pr\(^i\)\(_2\)NEt (6 equiv.) for 5 min. Removal of the Fmoc-protection was carried out by treatment with piperidine (20% in DMF) (5 \times 3 min). The completeness of each coupling and Fmoc deprotection were verified by Kaiser test. A positive Kaiser test was usually followed by an additional coupling cycle. The protected peptides were cleaved from the resin with CF\(_3\)CO\(_2\)H (TFA) (1% in CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\)), concentrated (~5 % of volume) and precipitated with water. Filtration and drying in a freeze drier / oven (40°C) gave the product.

5.69 Fmoc-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Lys(Cbz)-L-Leu-L-Gln-OH (189)

Peptide 189 was synthesised on 2-chlorotrityl chloride polystyrene resin (1.05 g, 1.66 mmol) according to the general procedure (Section 5.68) described above to yield 189 (1.23 g, 93%) as a white solid: R\(_t\) = 0.5 (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); mp 192-195°C; IR \(\nu_{\text{max}}\) 3295 (NH, OH), 1728-1635 (C=O); \(^1\)H NMR [(CD\(_3\)]\(_2\)SO) (COSY)] \(\delta\) 0.83-0.92 (6 H, m, Leu Me\(_2\)), 1.31-1.36 (2 H, m, Lys \(\gamma\)-H\(_2\)), 1.41-1.54 (5 H, m, Leu \(\beta\)-H\(_2\) + Lys \(\beta\)-H\(_1\), \(\delta\)-H\(_2\)), 1.62-1.68 (2 H, m, Leu \(\gamma\)-H\(_1\) + Lys \(\beta\)-H\(_1\)), 1.80-1.89 (1 H, m, Gln \(\beta\)-H), 1.95-2.04 (1 H, m, Gln \(\beta\)-H), 2.13-2.24 (2 H, m, Gln \(\gamma\)-H), 2.99 (2 H, m, Lys \(\varepsilon\)-H\(_2\)), 3.62-3.74 (4 H, m, 2 \times Ser \(\beta\)-H\(_2\)), 4.22 (1 H, m, Gln \(\alpha\)-H), 4.31-4.42 (5 H, m, Fmoc-CH\(_2\) + fluorene 9-H + Leu \(\alpha\)-H + Lys \(\alpha\)-H), 4.47-4.59 (5 H, m, 2 \times SerOCH\(_2\)Ph + Ser \(\alpha\)-H), 4.62-4.70 (1 H, m, Ser \(\alpha\)-H), 5.05 (2 H, s, Cbz CH\(_2\)), 6.88 (1 H, br, NH), 7.28-7.41 (18 H, m, 17 × Ar-H + NH), 7.46 (2 H, t, \(J = 7.4\) Hz, 2 × Ar-H), 7.76-7.80 (3 H, m, 2 × Ar-H + NH), 7.91-7.96 (3 H, m, 2 × Ar-H + NH), 8.11 (1 H, d, \(J = 7.7\) Hz, NH), 192
8.20 (1 H, d, J = 7.4 Hz, Gln NH), 8.33 (1 H, d, J = 7.4 Hz, Ser NH), 12.63 (1 H, s, OH); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(CD\(_3\))\(_2\)SO] (HSQC / HMBC) \(\delta\) 21.56 (Leu Me), 22.52 (Lys \(\gamma\)-C), 23.03 (Leu Me), 24.01 (Leu \(\gamma\)-C), 26.78 (Gln \(\beta\)-C), 29.13 (Lys \(\delta\)-C), 31.31 (Gln \(\gamma\)-C), 31.73 (Lys \(\beta\)-C), 38.83-40.08 (Lys \(\varepsilon\)-C), 40.82 (Leu \(\beta\)-C), 46.58 (fluorene 9-C), 50.67 (Leu \(\alpha\)-C), 51.52 (Gln \(\alpha\)-C), 52.55 (Lys \(\alpha\)-C), 52.80 (Ser \(\alpha\)-C), 54.67 (Ser \(\alpha\)-C), 65.10 (Cbz \(\text{OCH}_2\)\(\text{CH}_2\)Ph), 65.83 (Fmoc-CH\(_2\)), 69.74 (2 × Ser \(\beta\)-C), 71.98 (Ser\(\text{OCH}_2\)Ph), 72.08 (Ser\(\text{OCH}_2\)Ph), 120.09 (Ar-C), 125.30 (Ar-C), 127.07 (Ar-C), 127.33 (Ar-C), 127.41 (Ar-C), 127.63 (Ar-C), 127.74 (Ar-C), 128.13 (Ar-C), 128.16 (Ar-C), 128.32 (Ar-C), 128.37 (Ar-C), 128.41 (Ar-C), 128.44 (Ar-C), 128.57 (Ar-C), 130.35 (4a-C), 133.24 (8-C), 134.79 (Gln \(\delta\)-C=O); MS (ES\(^{+}\)) m/z 1120.5117 (M + Na) (C\(_{60}\)H\(_{71}\)N\(_7\)NaO\(_{13}\) requires 1120.5008), 1098.5283 (M + H) (C\(_{60}\)H\(_{72}\)N\(_7\)O\(_{13}\) requires 1098.5189).

5.70 Chloro-5-nitroisoquinoline (191)

A mixture of conc. H\(_2\)SO\(_4\) (1.37 g, 13.9 mmol) and conc. aq. HNO\(_3\) (70%, 1.20 g, 13.1 mmol) at 0°C was added to 1-chloroisoquinoline 190 (2.14 g, 13.1 mmol) in conc. H\(_2\)SO\(_4\) (10 mL) at 0°C and the mixture was stirred at 0°C for 2 h and at 20°C for 10 min before being poured onto icewater. The solid was collected by filtration and dried to give 191 (1.80 g, 66%) as a yellow solid: R\(_f\) = 0.4 (MeOH / CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) 1:9); mp 178-181°C (lit.\(^{196}\) mp 187°C); IR \(\nu_{\text{max}}\) 1524 (NO\(_2\)); \(^1\)H NMR (CDCl\(_3\)) \(\delta\) (COSY) \(\delta\) 7.81 (1 H, t, \(J = 8.1\) Hz, 7-H), 8.40 (1 H, dd, \(J = 6.2, 0.9\) Hz, 4-H), 8.49 (1 H, d, \(J = 6.1\) Hz, 3-H), 8.56 (1 H, dd, \(J = 7.7, 1.1\) Hz, 6-H), 8.74 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.5\) Hz, 8-H); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(CDCl\(_3\)] (HSQC / HMBC) \(\delta\) 115.80 (4-C), 126.98 (7-C), 127.54 (8a-C), 128.84 (6-C), 130.35 (4a-C), 133.24 (8-C), 144.78 (3-C), 145.43 (5-C), 152.63 (1-C).

5.71 1-Benzylxylo-5-nitroisoquinoline (192)

NaH (60% dispersion in mineral oil, 94 mg, 3.9 mmol) was added to benzyl alcohol (445 mg, 4.1 mmol) in dry DMF (10 mL). 1-Chloro-5-nitroisoquinoline 191 (407 mg, 2.0 mmol) was added and the mixture was stirred under N\(_2\) for 15 min at 20°C and at 100°C for 2 h. Water (50 mL) was added to the evaporation residue, which was then extracted with EtOAc (5 \(\times\) 50 mL). The combined organic phases were washed with brine and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (EtOAc / petroleum ether 1:9) yielded 192 (485 mg, 89%)
as a yellow solid: \( R_f = 0.9 \) (EtOAc / petroleum ether 1:9); mp 85-86°C; IR \( \nu_{max} \) 1522 (NO\(_2\)); 
\(^1\)H NMR [(CDCl\(_3\)) (COSY)] \( \delta \) 5.61 (2 H, s, CH\(_2\)), 7.34-7.44 (3 H, m, Ph 3,4,5-H\(_3\)), 7.53 (2 H, d, \( J = 7.3\) Hz, Ph 2,6-H\(_2\)), 7.61 (1 H, t, \( J = 8.2\) Hz, 7-H), 8.02 (1 H, dd, \( J = 6.4, 0.8\) Hz, 4-H), 8.23 (1 H, d, \( J = 6.3\) Hz, 3-H), 8.47 (1 H, dd, \( J = 7.8, 1.2\) Hz, 6-H), 8.67 (1 H, dd, \( J = 8.3, 0.9\) Hz, 8-H); \(^13\)C NMR [(CDCl\(_3\)) (HSQC / HMBC)] \( \delta \) 68.58 (CH\(_2\)), 110.00 (4-C), 120.89 (8a-C), 125.08 (7-C), 128.12 (Ar-C), 128.18 (Ar-C), 128.30 (Ar-C), 128.60 (Ar-C), 130.69 (4a-C), 131.28 (8-C), 136.67 (Ph 1-C), 143.74 (3-C), 144.82 (5-C), 160.43 (1-C); MS (ES\(^+\)) \( m/z \) 303.0729 (M + Na) (C\(_{16}\)H\(_{12}\)N\(_2\)NaO\(_3\) requires 303.0746), 281.0895 (M + H) (C\(_{16}\)H\(_{13}\)N\(_2\)O\(_3\) requires 281.0926).

5.72 1-Benzylkoxyisoquinolin-5-amine (193)

NaBH\(_4\) (381 mg, 10.1 mmol) in MeOH (5.0 mL) was added to 192 (698 mg, 2.5 mmol) and Pd/C (10% 692 mg) in MeOH (25 mL) and the mixture was stirred for 30 min. Aq. HCl (1.0 M, 1.0 mL) was added and the mixture was filtered through Celite\(^®\). The evaporation residue was partitioned between water and EtOAc. The product was extracted with EtOAc and the solution was dried. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / EtOAc 1:1) yielded 193 (206 mg, 33%) as a buff oil: \( R_f = 0.7 \) (EtOAc / petroleum ether 1:1); \(^1\)H NMR [(CDCl\(_3\)) (COSY)] \( \delta \) 5.66 (2 H, s, CH\(_2\)), 6.95 (1 H, dd, \( J = 7.8, 0.8\) Hz, 6-H), 7.17 (1 H, d, \( J = 6.0\) Hz, 4-H), 7.32-7.36 (2 H, m, 7-H, Ph 4-H), 7.40 (2 H, t, \( J = 7.5\) Hz, Ph 3,5-H\(_2\)), 7.54 (2 H, d, \( J = 7.0\) Hz, Ph 2,6-H\(_2\)), 7.77 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.5\) Hz, 8-H), 8.00 (1 H, d, \( J = 6.0\) Hz, 3-H); \(^13\)C NMR [(CDCl\(_3\)) (HSQC / HMBC)] \( \delta \) 67.96 (CH\(_2\)), 108.64 (4-C), 112.99 (6-C), 114.57 (8-C), 120.49 (8a-C), 127.07 (7-C, Ph 4-C), 127.67 (4a-C), 127.75 (Ph 2,6-C\(_2\)), 128.44 (Ph 3,5-C\(_2\)), 137.34 (Ph 1-C), 138.34 (3-C), 141.23 (5-C), 160.67 (1-C); MS (ES\(^+\)) \( m/z \) 273.0974 (M + Na) (C\(_{16}\)H\(_{14}\)N\(_2\)NaO requires 273.1004), 251.1161 (M + H) (C\(_{16}\)H\(_{15}\)N\(_2\)O requires 251.1184).

5.73 N-(4-Hydroxynaphthalen-1-yl)acetamide (198)

4-Aminonaphthalen-1-ol hydrochloride 31 (1.01 g, 5.15 mmol) was stirred with Et\(_3\)N (0.72 mL, 525 mg, 5.2 mmol) and Ac\(_2\)O (0.49 mL, 530 mg, 5.2 mmol) in MeOH (25 mL) at 50°C for 1 h. The solvent was evaporated. Chromatography (EtOAc / CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) 1:3) gave 198 (959 mg, 93%) as a pale pink solid: \( R_f = 0.4 \) (EtOAc); mp 184-186°C (lit.\(^{197}\) mp 186-187°C); IR \( \nu_{max} \) 3327, 3258 (OH, NH), 1652 (C=O); \(^1\)H NMR [(CD\(_3\)\(_2\)SO) (NOESY)] \( \delta \) 2.18 (3 H, s, Me), 6.89 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.0\) Hz, 3-H), 7.36 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.0\) Hz, 2-H), 7.51 (1 H, ddd, \( J = 8.2, 6.8, 1.4\) Hz).
Hz, 6-H), 7.56 (1 H, ddd, \( J = 8.2, 6.8, 1.4 \) Hz, 7-H), 7.94 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.0 \) Hz, 8-H), 8.20 (1 H, ddd, \( J = 8.0, 0.6 \) Hz, 5-H), 9.66 (1 H, s, NH), 10.11 (1 H, s, OH); \(^{13}\)C NMR ([CD\(_3\)\(_2\)SO] (HSQC / HMBC) \( \delta \) 23.12 (Me), 107.27 (3-C), 122.23 (5-C), 122.81 (8-C), 123.59 (2-C), 124.51 (6-C), 124.70 (4a-C), 124.98 (1-C), 125.93 (7-C), 129.78 (8a-C), 151.16 (4-C), 168.86 (C=O); MS (ES\(^{-}\)) \( m/z \) 200.0713 (M - H) (C\(_{12}\)H\(_{10}\)NO\(_2\) requires 200.0712).

5.74 N-(4-Methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)acetamide (199)

Compound 198 (211 mg, 1.05 mmol), K\(_2\)CO\(_3\) (158 mg, 1.14 mmol) and MeI (70 \( \mu \)L, 149 mg, 1.05 mmol) in acetone (10 mL) were refluxed for 16 h. The solvent was evaporated. The residue in EtOAc, was washed with water, sat. aq. Na\(_2\)S\(_2\)O\(_3\) and brine. Drying, evaporation and chromatography (CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) / EtOAc 3:2) gave 199 (189 mg, 80%) as a pale pink solid: \( R_f \) = 0.3 (CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) / EtOAc 3:2); mp 185-187°C (lit.\(^{198}\) mp 186-186.5°C); IR \( \nu_{\text{max}} \) 3270 (NH), 1652 (C=O); \(^{1}\)H NMR [CD\(_3\)\(_2\)SO] (NOESY) \( \delta \) 2.20 (3 H, s, NCO\(_{\text{Me}}\)), 4.02 (3 H, s, OMe), 7.00 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.2 \) Hz, 3-H), 7.52 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.2 \) Hz, 2-H), 7.57 (1 H, ddd, \( J = 8.0, 6.8, 1.2 \) Hz, 6-H), 7.62 (1 H, ddd, \( J = 8.1, 6.8, 1.3 \) Hz, 7-H), 8.01 (1 H, d, \( J = 7.9 \) Hz, 8-H), 8.23 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.0, 1.2 \) Hz, 5-H), 9.75 (1 H, s, NH); \(^{13}\)C NMR [CD\(_3\)\(_2\)SO] (HSQC / HMBC) \( \delta \) 23.19 (NCO\(_{\text{Me}}\)), 55.66 (OMe), 103.82 (3-C), 121.65 (5-C), 122.89 (8-C), 122.93 (2-C), 125.02 (4a-C), 125.27 (6-C), 126.27 (7-C), 126.46 (1-C), 129.33 (8a-C), 152.63 (4-C), 168.91 (C=O); MS (ES\(^{-}\)) \( m/z \) 214.0890 (M - H) (C\(_{13}\)H\(_{12}\)NO\(_2\) requires 214.0868).

5.75 4-Methoxynaphthalen-1-amine (200)

A suspension of 199 (123 mg, 0.57 mmol) in aq. HCl (3.0 M, 9 mL) and MeOH (3 mL) was heated at 90°C for 4 h. The mixture was cooled to 20°C and sat. aq. NaHCO\(_3\) was added until the mixture was basic to universal indicator paper. The suspension was extracted with EtOAc. The extract was washed with water, brine and dried. Evaporation and chromatography (petroleum ether / CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\), 1:4 \( \rightarrow \) CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\)) gave 200 (83 mg, 83%) as a purple oil: \( R_f \) = 0.3 (CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\) / EtOAc 3:2); mp 185-187°C (lit.\(^{198}\) mp 186-186.5°C); IR \( \nu_{\text{max}} \) 3270 (NH), 1652 (C=O); \(^{1}\)H NMR [CD\(_3\)\(_2\)SO] (COSY) \( \delta \) 2.20 (3 H, s, NH\(_2\)), 4.00 (3 H, s, Me), 6.68 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.0 \) Hz, 3-H), 6.71 (1 H, d, \( J = 8.0 \) Hz, 2-H), 7.50 (2 H, m, 6-H,7-H), 7.82 (1 H, m, 8-H), 8.28 (1 H, m, 5-H); \(^{13}\)C NMR [CD\(_3\)\(_2\)SO] (HSQC / HMBC) \( \delta \) 55.78 (Me), 104.50 (3-C), 109.61 (2-C), 120.95 (8-C), 122.51 (5-C), 125.19 (4a-C), 125.21 (6-C or 7-C), 125.58 (7-C or 6-C), 126.14 (8a-C), 135.27 (1-C), 149.17 (4-C); MS (ES\(^{-}\)) \( m/z \) 174.0965 (M + H) (C\(_{11}\)H\(_{10}\)NO requires 174.0919).
Fmoc-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Lys(Cbz)-L-Leu-L-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (201)

Compound 189 (203 mg, 0.19 mmol) and 200 (67.9 mg, 0.39 mmol) were stirred in dry DMF (10 mL) and at 0°C. HOBt (42.6 mg, 0.28 mmol) and EDC.HCl (56.5 mg, 0.29 mmol) were added and the mixture was stirred for 2 d under N₂ at room temperature. The DMF was evaporated and the residue was triturated with hot MeOH. Cooling at 0°C for 30 min, filtration, washing with MeOH and drying gave 201 (181 mg, 78%) as a pale purple solid: Rₕ = 0.50 (EtOAc / AcOH / MeOH 19:2:1); mp 227-228°C; ¹H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (COSY) δ 0.82-0.93 (6 H, m, Leu Me₂), 1.31 (2 H, br, Lys γ-H₂), 1.39-1.40 (2 H, m, Lys δ-H₂), 1.53-1.56 (3 H, m, Leu β-H₂ + Lys β-H₁), 1.61-1.68 (2 H, m, Leu γ-H₁ + Lys β-H₁), 1.99-2.04 (1 H, m, Gln β-H₁), 2.11-2.15 (1 H, m, Gln β-H₁), 2.27-2.31 (2 H, m, Gln γ-H₂), 2.97-2.98 (2 H, m, Lys ε-H₂), 3.62-3.73 (4 H, m, Ser β-H₄), 4.01 (3 H, s, OMe), 4.27-4.43 (5 H, m, Fmoc CH₂, Fmoc CH, Leu α-H, Lys α-H), 4.64-4.66 (1 H, m, Ser α-H), 5.04 (2 H, s, Cbz CH₂), 6.92 (1 H, br, NH), 6.99 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, Naph Ar-H), 7.26-7.50 (21 H, m, Fmoc Ar-H, Bn Ar-H, Naph Ar-H, 3 × NH), 7.53-7.61 (2 H, m, 2 × Ar-H), 7.75-7.80 (3 H, m, 2 × Ar-H, NH), 7.93-8.02 (4 H, m, 3 × Ar-H, NH), 8.08-8.15 (1 H, m, NH), 8.20-8.23 (2 H, m, Ar-H, NH), 8.29-8.33 (1 H, m, NH); ¹³C NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 21.51 (Leu Me), 22.60 (Lys γ-C), 23.04 (Leu Me), 24.09 (Leu γ-C), 27.44 (Gln β-C), 27.81 (Lys δ-C), 29.22 (Gln γ-C), 31.55 (Lys β-C), 38.82-40.07 (2 C, Lys ε-C, Leu β-C), 46.55 (Fmoc CH), 50.87 (Leu α-C or Lys α-C), 51.14 (Lys α-C or Leu α-C), 52.83 (2 × Ser α-C), 54.66 (Gln α-C), 55.66 (OME), 65.09 (Cbz CH₂), 65.81 (Fmoc CH₂), 69.74 (2 × Ser β-C), 72.06 (2 C, 2 × SerOCH₂Ph), 103.72 (Naph Ar-C), 120.10 (Ar-C), 121.67 (Ar-C), 122.83 (Ar-C), 123.11 (Ar-C), 124.99 (Ar-C), 125.30 (Ar-C), 125.81 (Ar-C), 127.07 (Ar-C), 127.44 (Ar-C), 127.63 (Ar-C), 127.73 (Ar-C), 128.15 (Ar-C), 128.32 (Ar-C), 196
129.39 (Ar-C), 137.22 (Cbz C₉), 138.13 (2 × Bn C₉), 140.68 (Ar-C₉), 145.07 (Fmoc C₉), 152.89 (Naph 1-C), 156.02 (Cbz C=O), 169.20 (C=O), 169.75 (C=O), 170.93 (C=O), 171.33 (C=O), 172.07 (C=O), 172.96 (C=O), 173.75 (C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 1253.6693 (M + H) (C₇₁H₸₁N₈O₁₃ requires 1253.5923), 1031.5964 [(M – Fmoc) +H] (C₅₆H₷₁N₈O₁₁ requires 1031.5242).

5.77 Fmoc-L-Ser(OAc)-L-Ser(OAc)-L-Lys-L-Leu-L-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (202)

![Chemical Structure Image]

Compound 201 (1.40 g, 1.1 mmol) was stirred with HBr in AcOH (33%, 10 mL) at 20°C for 2 h. Et₂O was added and the precipitate was filtered and washed with Et₂O. The solid residue was dried and triturated with hot MeOH. The solvent was cooled to 20°C and placed at 0°C for 30 min. The solid residue was collected by filtration and washed with cold MeOH. Drying gave 202 (0.89 g, 72%) as a white solid: mp 245-246°C; ¹H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (COSY) δ 0.89 (3 H, d, J = 6.4 Hz, Leu Me), 0.93 (3 H, d, J = 6.4 Hz, Leu Me), 1.35-1.37 (2 H, m, Lys γ-H₂), 1.57 (5 H, m, Leu β-H₂, Lys β-H₁, Lys δ-H₂), 1.66-1.73 (2 H, m, Lys β-H₁, Leu γ-H₁), 2.03 (3 H, s, SerOCOCH₃), 2.05 (3 H, s, SerOCOCH₃), 2.03-2.14 (2 H, m, Gln β-H₂), 2.29 (2 H, m, Gln γ-H₂), 2.79 (2 H, qn, J = 2.8 Hz, Lys ε-H₂), 4.03 (3 H, s, OMe), 4.11-4.31 (5 H, m, 2 × Ser β-H₂, Fmoc CH), 4.34-4.47 (5 H, m, Fmoc CH₂, Leu α-H, Lys α-H, Ser α-H₁), 4.56 (1 H, dd, J = 13.6, 7.5 Hz, Gln α-H), 4.66 (1 H, dd, J = 12.8, 7.0 Hz, Ser α-H₁), 6.92 (1 H, s, NH), 7.02 (1 H, d, J = 8.4 Hz, Naph 2-H), 7.37 (2 H, t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2 × Ar-H), 7.41 (1 H, s, NH), 7.48 (3 H, t, J = 8.6 Hz, Naph 3-H, 2 × Ar-H), 7.59 (2 H, qn, J = 6.9 Hz, 2 × Ar-H), 7.70 (3 H, s, Lys NH₃⁺Br⁻), 7.78 (2 H, dd, J = 7.1, 0.31 Hz, 2 × Ar-H), 7.84 (1 H, d, J = 8.3 Hz, NH), 7.96 (3 H, d, J = 7.3 Hz, 3 × Ar-H), 8.10 (1 H, d, J = 7.6 Hz, NH), 8.25 (3 H, m, Ar-H, 2 × NH), 8.41 (1 H, d, J = 7.6 Hz, NH), 9.83 (1 H, s, NH); ¹³C NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] δ (HSQC / HMBC) 20.63 (2 × SerOCOCH₃), 21.49 (Leu Me), 22.12 (Lys γ-C), 23.09 (Leu Me), 24.11 (Leu γ-C), 26.56 (Lys δ-C), 27.85 (Gln β-C), 31.26 (Lys β-C), 31.49 (Gln γ-C), 38.67 (Lys ε-C), 40.62 (Leu β-C), 46.57 (Fmoc CH), 51.00 (Leu α-C), 51.68 (Ser α-C), 52.31
(Lys α-C), 52.89 (Gln α-C), 53.58 (Ser α-C), 55.71 (OMe), 63.22 (Ser β-C), 63.33 (Ser β-C), 65.82 (Fmoc CH₂), 103.77 (Naph 2-C), 120.14 (2 × Ar-C), 121.69 (Ar-C), 122.79 (Ar-C), 123.11 (Naph 3-C), 125.01 (Ar-C₉), 125.23 (2 × Ar-C), 125.41 (Ar-C), 125.79 (Ar-C₉), 126.39 (Ar-C), 127.09 (2 × Ar-CH), 127.67 (2 × Ar-CH), 129.38 (Ar-C₉), 140.71 (2 × Ar-C₉), 143.74 (2 × Fmoc Ar-C₉), 152.89 (Naph 1-C), 155.97 (C=O), 168.20 (C=O), 169.04 (C=O), 170.10 (SerOCOCH₃), 170.16 (SerOCOCH₃), 170.88 (C=O), 171.06 (C=O), 172.07 (C=O), 173.72 (Gln δ-C=O); MS (ES⁺) m/z 1045.4515 (M + Na) (C₅₃H₆₆N₈NaO₁₃ requires 1045.4647), 1023.4706 (M + H) (C₅₃H₆₇N₈O₁₃ requires 1023.4828), 981.4644 (M – OAc + H) (C₅₁H₆₅N₈O₁₂ requires 981.4722).

5.78 Fmoc-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (203)

![Chemical Structure of 5.78 Fmoc-Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (203)]

Compound 201 (76.5 mg, 0.061 mmol) was stirred with HBr in AcOH (33%, 5 mL) for 2 h. MeOH was added and excess reagent were evaporated. The solid residue was triturated several times with Et₂O and dried to give a purple solid. Purification (~28.6 mg) by preparative HPLC gave 203 (14.2 mg, 48%) as a buff solid: Rₜ 11.81 min (0.1% TFA in water / 0.1% TFA in acetonitrile, 95% → 5%, over 20 min); MS (ES⁺) m/z 961.4453 (M + Na) (C₄₉H₆₂N₈NaO₁₁ requires 961.4436), 939.4633 (M + 1) (C₄₉H₆₃N₈O₁₁ requires 939.4616).
5.79 Ser(Bn)-Ser(Bn)-Lys(Cbz)-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (204)

Compound 201 (453 mg, 0.36 mmol) was stirred in piperidine / DMF (20 mL, 1:5) at 20°C for 45 min. The solvent was evaporated and the residue was triturated with hot MeOH. The mixture was cooled to 0°C, filtered and the collected solid washed with cold MeOH. Drying gave 204 (304 mg, 82%) as an off white solid: Rf = 0.5 (EtOAc / MeOH / AcOH 9:1:1); mp 225-226°C; 1H NMR [(CD3)2SO] (COSY) δ 0.85 (3 H, d, J = 6.4 Hz, Leu Me), 0.89 (3 H, d, J = 6.4 Hz, Leu Me), 1.29-1.31 (2 H, m, Lys γ-H2), 1.41 (2 H, br, Lys δ-H2), 1.54-1.59 (3 H, m, Leu β-H2 + Lys β-H1), 1.62-1.71 (2 H, m, Leu γ + Lys β-H1), 2.01-2.14 (4 H, m, Gln β-H2 + NH2), 2.26-2.28 (2 H, m, Gln γ-H2), 2.96-3.00 (2 H, m, Lys ε-H), 3.52-3.71 (5 H, m, 2 × Ser β-H + Ser α-H), 4.02 (3 H, s, OMe), 4.31-4.43 (2 H, m, Leu α-H + Lys α-H), 4.49-4.56 (5 H, m, 2 × SerOCH2Ph + Gln α-H), 4.61 (1 H, br, Ser α-H), 5.04 (2 H, s, Cbz OCH2Ph), 6.90 (1 H, s, NH), 7.00 (1 H, d, J = 8.3 Hz, Naph 2-H), 7.26 (1 H, t, J = 5.6 Hz, Cbz NH), 7.33-7.42 (16 H, m, 10 × Bn Ar-CH + 5 × Cbz Ar-CH, NH), 7.49 (1 H, d, J = 8.2 Hz, Naph 3-H), 7.56-7.58 (2 H, m, Naph 6,7-H2), 7.95-8.00 (2 H, m, Naph 5-H + NH), 8.19-8.23 (3 H, m, Naph 8-H + 2 × NH), 8.30 (1 H, br, NH), 9.80 (1 H, s, NH); 13C NMR [(CD3)2SO] (HSQC / HMBC) δ 21.51 (Leu Me), 22.33 (Lys γ-C), 23.04 (Leu Me), 27.77 (Gln β-C), 29.07 (Lys δ-C), 31.52 (Gln γ-C + Lys β-C), 38.83-40.09 (Leu β-C + Lys ε-C), 51.00 (Lys α-C or Leu α-C), 52.88 (Ser α-C), 52.61 (Leu α-C or Lys α-C), 52.96 (Gln α-C), 54.63 (Ser α-C), 55.67 (OMe), 65.09 (Cbz OCH2Ph), 69.93 (Ser β-C), 72.02 (2 × SerOCH2Ph), 72.43 (Ser β-C), 121.65 (Naph 8-C), 122.79 (Naph 5-C), 123.06 (Naph 3-C), 124.99 (Naph 6-C or 7-C), 125.38 (Naph 8a-C), 125.82 (Naph 4-C), 126.38 (Naph 7-C or 6-C), 127.37 (Ar-C), 127.44 (Ar-C), 127.72 (Ar-C), 128.18 (Ar-C), 128.33 (Ar-C), 129.38 (Naph 4a-C), 137.22 (Cbz Ar-Cq), 138.09 (Bn Ar-Cq), 138.28 (Bn Ar-Cq), 152.86 (Naph 1-C), 155.83 (Cbz C=O), 169.32
(C=O), 170.90 (C=O), 171.32 (C=O), 172.12 (C=O), 172.76 (C=O), 173.67 (C=O); MS (ES+) m/z 1053.5064 (M + Na) (C_{59}H_{70}N_{8}O_{11} requires 1053.5062, 1031.5296 (M + H) (C_{59}H_{71}N_{8}O_{11} requires 1031.5242).

5.80 Ser-Ser-Lys-Leu-Gln-N-(4-methoxynaphthalen-1-yl)amide (205)

![Structure of compound 205](image)

Compound 202 (330 mg, 0.32 mmol) was stirred with HBr in AcOH (33%, 4 mL) for 2 h at 20°C. MeOH was added and the solvent was evaporated. The solid residue was recrystallised (MeOH / EtOAc) to give 205 (176.41 mg, 63%) as a white solid: mp 224-225; \(^1\)H NMR [(D_2)O (COSY)] δ 0.80 (3 H, d, \(J = 4.8\) Hz, Leu Me), 0.85 (3 H, d, \(J = 5.0\) Hz, Leu Me), 1.32 (2 H, br, Lys γ-H_2), 1.51-1.54 (2 H, m, Lys δ-H_2), 1.59-1.61 (4 H, m, Leu β-H_2 + Leu γ + Lys β-H_1), 1.71 (1 H, m, Lys β-H_1), 2.11 (1 H, m, Gln β-H_1), 2.25 (1 H, m, Gln β-H_1), 2.41-2.44 (2 H, m, Gln γ-H_2), 2.83-2.85 (2 H, m, Lys ε-H_2), 3.80-3.81 (2 H, m, Ser β-H_2), 3.92 (2 H, m, Ser β-H_2), 3.96 (3 H, s, OMe), 4.14 (1 H, m, Ser α-H), 4.24 (1 H, t, \(J = 6.8\) Hz, Lys α-H), 4.30-4.32 (1 H, m, Leu α-H), 4.46 (1 H, m, Ser α-H), 4.51 (1 H, m, Gln α-H), 6.92 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.1\) Hz, Naph 2-H), 7.29 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.2\) Hz, Naph 3-H), 7.52 (1 H, t, \(J = 7.0\) Hz, Naph 7-H), 7.56 (1 H, t, \(J = 6.7\) Hz, Naph 6-H), 7.70 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.1\) Hz, Naph 5-H), 8.20 (1 H, d, \(J = 8.1\) Hz, Naph 8-H); \(^{13}\)C NMR [(D_2)O (HSQC / HMBC)] δ 20.88 (Leu Me), 21.96 (Leu Me), 24.34 (Leu γ-C), 26.20 (Lys δ-C), 30.22 (Lys β-C), 31.26 (Gln γ-C), 39.09 (Lys ε-C), 39.57 (Leu β-C), 52.71 (Leu α-C), 53.70 (Lys α-C + Gln α-C), 54.40 (Ser α-C), 55.42 (Ser α-C), 55.79 (OMe), 60.14 (Ser β-C), 61.12 (Ser β-C), 104.21 (Naph 2-C), 122.06 (Naph 8-C), 122.17 (Naph 5-C), 123.91 (Naph 4-C), 125.14 (Naph 8a-C), 125.39 (Naph 3-C) 126.13 (Naph 7-C), 127.55 (Naph 6-C), 129.99 (Naph 4a-C), 154.61 (Naph 1-C), 168.00 (Ser C=O), 171.40 (Ser C=O), 173.40 (Gln C=O), 173.74 (Lys C=O), 174.81 (Leu C=O), 177.81 (Gln δ-C=O); Ms (ES+) m/z 739.3718 (M + Na) (C_{34}H_{52}N_{8}NaO_{9} requires 739.3755).
5.81 α-Methoxy-ω-(4-nitrophenoxy carbonyl)-polyoxyethylene (207)

Monomethoxy-PEG-OH (Mw ~5000 g mol⁻¹) 206 (1.0 g, 0.20 mmol) was dissolved in toluene (20 mL) and dried by water-toluene distillation. 1,2-Dichloroethane (2 mL), 4-nitrophenyl chloroformate (81.3 mg, 0.40 mmol) and Et₃N (60 µL, 43.6 mg, 0.43 mmol) were added sequentially. The mixture was stirred overnight at 20°C. Et₂O was added to form a white precipitate. Filtration and drying gave 207 (1.0 g, 97%) as a white solid: Rₐ = 0.3 (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 3.35 (3 H, s, OMe), 3.43 (2 H, t, J = 5.2 Hz, mPEG CH₂), 3.52 (2 H, m, mPEG CH₂), 3.61-3.72 (~434 H, m, mPEG CH₂), 3.77-3.78 (4 H, m, mPEG CH₂), 4.41 (2 H, t, J = 4.5 Hz, mPEG CH₂), 7.36 (2 H, d, J = 9.1 Hz, Ar 2,6-H), 8.25 (2 H, d, J = 9.1 Hz, Ar 3, 5-H).

5.82 mPEG-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Lys(Cbz)-L-Leu-L-Gln-methoxynaphthalenamide (208)

Compound 204 (45.8 mg, 44 µmol) was stirred in dry DMF (1.0 mL) and Et₃N (0.05 mL) added, followed by addition of mPEG-nitrophenyl ester 207 (205mg, 0.040 mmol). The mixture was stirred under N₂ at 20°C for 8 d. The solvent was evaporated. Reverse-phase chromatography (H₂O / MeCN 99:1 → 5:95) and freeze drying gave 208 (123 mg, 52%) as a white solid: Rₐ = 0.7 (MeCN / MeOH 4:1); ¹H NMR [(CD₃)₂SO] (COSY)] δ 0.85 (3 H, d, J = 6.4 Hz, Leu Me), 0.89 (3 H, d, J = 6.4 Hz, Leu Me), 1.23-1.30 (2 H, m, Lys γ-H₂), 1.39-1.41 (Lys δ-H₂), 1.51-1.59 (3 H, m, Leu β-H₂ + Lys β-H₁), 1.66-1.71 (2 H, m, Leu γ-H + Lys β-H₁), 1.96-2.04 (1 H, m, Gln β-H₁), 2.12-2.16 (1 H, m, Gln β-H₁), 2.27-2.31 (2 H, m, Gln γ-H₂), 2.97-2.99 (2 H, m, Lys ε-H₂), 3.30 (3 H, s, mPEG OMe), 3.39 (2 H, t, J = 5.0 Hz, mPEG...
CH$_2$), 3.47-3.68 ( ~444 H, m, 2 × Ser β-H$_2$ + mPEG 220 × CH$_2$), 3.74 (2 H, t, $J = 4.6$ Hz, mPEG CH$_2$), 4.02 (3 H, s, Naph OMe), 4.10-4.13 (1 H, Ser α-H), 4.31-4.45 (2 H, m, Leu α-H + Lys α-H), 4.52-4.58 (5 H, m, Gln α-H + 2 × SerOCH$_2$Ph), 4.63-4.64 (1 H, m, Ser α-H), 5.05 (2 H, s, Cbz OCH$_2$Ph), 6.85 (1 H, s, NH), 6.99 (1 H, d, $J = 9.0$ Hz, Naph 2-H), 7.16-7.19 (1 H, br, NH), 7.28-7.58 (2 H, m, Naph 3-H, NH), 7.56-7.58 (2 H, m, Naph 6,7-H$_2$), 7.96-7.98 (2 H, m, Naph 5-H, NH), 8.07 (1 H, d, $J = 7.1$ Hz, NH), 8.15-8.23 (3 H, m, Naph 8-H, 2 × NH), 8.36 (1 H, br, NH), 9.74 (1 H, s, NH).

5.83 Fmoc-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Ser(Bn)-L-Lys(Cbz)-L-Leu-Gln-L-Leu-L-D-Ser(Bu')-OH (213)

Peptide 213 was synthesised on 2-chlorotrityl chloride polystyrene resin (1.09 g, 1.64 mmol) according to the general procedure (Section 5.68) as described above to yield 213 (1.27 g, 89%) as a white solid: $R_f = 0.7$ (EtOAc / MeOH 1:1); mp 243-245°C; IR $\nu_{\text{max}}$ 3287 (NH, OH), 1634 (C=O); $^1$H NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO] (COSY) $\delta$ 0.79-0.86 (12 H, m, 2 × Leu Me), 1.10 (9 H, s, Bu'), 1.24 (2 H, m, Lys γ-H$_2$), 1.36-1.46 (7 H, m, 2 × Leu β-H$_2$ + Lys β-H$_1$, δ-H$_2$), 1.57-1.62 (3 H, m, 2 × Leu γ-H + Lys β-H$_1$), 1.75-1.77 (1 H, m, Gln β-H), 1.85-1.89 (1 H, m, Gln β-H), 2.09 (2 H, t, $J = 7.7$ Hz, Gln γ-H$_2$), 2.94-2.95 (2 H, m, Lys ε-H$_2$), 3.49-3.51 (1 H, m, D-Ser β-H$_1$), 3.58-3.69 (5 H, m, 2 × L-Ser β-H$_2$ + D-Ser β-H$_1$), 4.22-4.37 (7 H, m, Fmoc-CH$_2$, fluorene 9-H, Gln α-H, Leu α-H, D-Ser α-H, Lys α-H), 4.42-4.51 (6 H, m, 2 × SerOCH$_2$Ph, Leu α-H, L-Ser α-H), 4.60 (1 H, m, L-Ser α-H), 5.00 (2 H, s, Cbz CH$_2$), 6.77 (1 H, br, NH), 7.18-7.43 (20 H, m, 19 × Ar-H + NH), 7.63-7.74 (3 H, m, Fmoc Ar-H$_2$ + NH), 7.89-7.90 (4 H, m, Fmoc Ar-H$_2$ + 2 × NH), 7.99-8.06 (3 H, m, 3 × NH), 8.23-8.34 (2 H, m, 2 × NH); $^{13}$C NMR [(CD$_3$)$_2$SO] $\delta$ (HSQC / HMBC) $\delta$ 21.58 (2 × Leu Me), 22.55 (Lys γ-C), 202
22.96 (Leu Me), 23.02 (Leu Me), 23.99 (Leu γ-C), 24.04 (Leu γ-C), 27.08 (CMe₃), 27.75 (Gln β-C), 29.13 (Lys δ-C), 31.48 (Gln γ-C), 31.68 (Lys β-C), 40.75 (Leu β-C), 41.20 (Leu β-C), 46.57 (fluorene 9-C), 50.89 (Leu α-C), 51.98 (Gln α-C), 52.56 (Lys α-C), 52.64 (Ser α-C), 57.03 (2 × L-Ser β-C), 59.87 (SerOCH₂Ph), 61.51 (D-Ser β-C), 62.76 (Ser α-C), 64.43 (Ser α-C), 64.65 (L-Ser α-C), 64.88 (2 × L-Ser β-C), 65.09 (Cbz OCH₂Ph), 65.82 (Fmoc CH₂), 69.73 (2 × L-Ser β-C), 71.97 (SerOCH₂Ph), 72.08 (SerOCH₂Ph), 72.56 (Lys α-C), 72.65 (CMe₃), 120.07 (Fmoc Ar-C), 125.28 (Fmoc Ar-C), 127.30 (Ar-C), 127.35 (Ar-C), 127.39 (Ar-C), 127.42 (Ar-C), 127.61 (Ar-C), 127.70 (Ar-C), 128.11 (Ar-C), 128.13 (Ar-C), 128.30 (Ar-C), 137.22 (Cbz Ph 1-C), 138.07 (Bn Ph 1-C), 138.13 (Bn Ph 1-C), 140.67 (2 × Fmoc-C₉), 143.72 (Fmoc-C₉), 143.78 (Fmoc-C₉), 156.02 (Cbz C=O), 169.10 (C=O), 169.67 (C=O), 170.21 (C=O), 170.73 (C=O), 171.12 (C=O), 171.53 (C=O), 171.76 (C=O), 171.82 (C=O), 173.77 (Gln δ-C=O); (MS (ES⁺) m/z 1376.6879 (M + Na) (C₇₃H₉₅N₉NaO₁₆ requires 1376.6795).

5.84 Calf-thymus DNA melting assay

5.84.1 Buffer preparation
NaH₂PO₄ (1.17 g, 9.75 mM), ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) disodium salt dihydrate (372 mg, 1.0 mM) and NaCl (438 mg, 7.5 mM) were dissolved in MilliQ water (0.8 L). The pH was adjusted to pH 7.0 using aq. NaOH (0.1 M) or aq. HCl (0.1 M) as required and Milli-Q water added to produce 1 L.

5.84.2 Calf thymus DNA solution preparation
Calf thymus DNA stock solution was prepared by dissolving DNA in 9.75 mM phosphate buffer to a concentration of 1 mg mL⁻¹. Once fully dissolved, the stock was diluted down until an absorbance of 0.6 at 256 nm was obtained. This was found to be approximately 1.6 mL of DNA stock made up to 50 mL with phosphate buffer (i.e. ~0.032 mg mL⁻¹).

5.84.3 Calculations
The DNA concentration of the diluted DNA (9.06 × 10⁻⁵ M) was calculated using the following Beer-Lambert equation:

Equation 1: \[ A = \varepsilon c l \]
Where: \( A \) = the absorbance of diluted calf thymus DNA at 256 nm
\( \varepsilon \) = molar extinction of DNA (6600 M⁻¹ cm⁻¹);²⁰⁰,²⁰¹
c = molar concentration of DNA solution;
\[ l = \text{path length in cm (in this case 1 cm cuvette)}. \]

The volume of the drug sample solution needed to obtain the required molar equivalent (0.01 → 0.6) could be worked out using the following equation:

Equation 2: Volume of sample = Molar concentration of diluted DNA × Volume of diluted DNA × MW of drug sample × Molar equivalent required

5.84.4 Procedure

Compound 136 (1.04 mg, 1.94 µmol) was dissolved in DMSO (1 mL) to make a stock solution (1.94 mM). Different volumes of the stock solution (corresponding to the range of molar equivalents given above (Equation 2) were added to the DNA (3 mL, 9.06 × 10^{-5} M) in the appropriate cells and incubated at room temperature for 1 h to allow alkylation of DNA.

Samples in quartz cells consisted of:
- Cell 1 (blank) → Buffer + DMSO (40 µL);
- Cells 2 and 3 (positive control) → DNA + buffer + DMSO (40 µL);
- Cells 4 and 5 → Test compound + DNA + buffer + DMSO.

All cells contained the same total volume of DMSO (40 µL). Since the test compound solution was prepared in DMSO, this had to be taken into account. The absorbance at 256 nm was monitored for each sample over the range of 40-95°C at a rate of 0.5°C per minute in a 1 cm quartz cell using a complete PC controlled spectrometer system by Perkin Elmer: Lambda BioDNA Melt system including PTP-6 temperature controlled programmer for simultaneous curves, UVTemplab software and in-cuvette temperature sensor. The thermal melting \( T_m \) of the calf thymus DNA was determined for samples in cells 2-5. \( \Delta T_m = T_m \) of DNA-drug complex (cells 4 and 5) – \( T_m \) of DNA alone (cells 2 and 3). \( T_m \) values were calculated from the midpoint of the first derivative plots.
5.85 Anti-proliferative assay

5.85.1 Preparation of cell suspension
Medium was poured off the cells and the cells washed with PBS (5 mL). Trypsin/EDTA [(0.05% (w/v), 5 mL)] was added and the mixture placed at 37°C until the cells detached. Medium (8 mL) was added to suspend the cells which were transferred to a Universal tube. The suspension was centrifuged at ~1300 rpm for 7 min using Jouvan B3.11 centrifuge at room temperature. The supernatant was removed and the cells re-suspended in medium (5 mL). This was then diluted (~1 in 10) and the cells counted using a haemocytometer. Further dilution was made to give a suspension with the required number of cells per well for the experiment (2000 cells per well to be added in 50 µL). These seed densities had been determined previously to give an acceptable optical density value after 3 d incubation.

5.85.2 Procedure

Cells (2000 per well) were seeded onto 96-well microtitre plates, allowed to attach for 2-4 h at 37°C, in humidified atmosphere containing 5% (v/v) CO₂ and then treated with various concentrations of test compounds (1 µM → 1 nM for 136 and 100 µM → 100 nM for 135).

Quadruplicate samples were run by adding the following reagents:

- Culture medium only (negative control) → 100 µL medium per well;
- Cells suspension only (positive control) → 50 µL medium + 50 µL cell suspension;
- Cells + 1% (v/v) DMSO vehicle → 50 µL of 2% (v/v) DMSO in medium + 50 µL cell suspension;
- Cells + test compound in 1% (v/v) DMSO vehicle → 50 µL of drug at 2 × concentration with 2% (v/v) DMSO in medium + 50 µL cell suspension.

Each well contained a final volume of 100 µL medium containing final vehicle concentration of 1% (v/v) DMSO and was incubated at 37°C, in a humidified atmosphere containing 5% (v/v) CO₂ for 3 d. Cell viability was measured by chemical treatment with MTS reagent as recommended by the manufacturer (Promega, U.S.A), followed by incubation at 37°C, in humidified atmosphere containing 5% (v/v) CO₂ for 2-4 hours after which the absorbance of each well was measured at 490 nm using a VERSAmax microplate reader. The determination of IC₅₀ data was calculated using a four parameter logistic curve and SigmaPlot 12 software.
for windows. Means and standard deviations were calculated from background corrected absorbance. (MTS procedure was adopted from a protocol developed by Dr Pauline Wood.\(^2\)

### 5.86 PSA-Cleavage Assay

#### 5.86.1 Buffer preparation

Tris.HCl (788 mg, 50 mM), NaCl (818 mg, 140 mM) and were dissolved in Milli-Q water (80 mL). The pH was adjusted to pH 7.4 using aq. NaOH (0.1 M) or aq. HCl (0.1 M) as required and Milli-Q water added to produce 100 mL.

#### 5.86.2 Procedure\(^98, 100\)

The peptide-model drug conjugate 203 or 205 (~2 mM) was incubated with PSA (10 µg mL\(^{-1}\)) at 37°C in 50 mM Tris.HCl and 140 mM NaCl, pH 7.4 buffer (500 µL). A control experiment without the enzyme was also set up. Samples (50 µL) were taken at different time intervals (up to 7 d) and added to ZnCl\(_2\) solution (final concentration 10 mM) to quench the reaction. Centrifugation (Eppendorf Mini-Spin centrifuge, 13400 rpm, 10 min) was followed by HPLC analysis of the supernatant on reverse-phase Phenomenex Gemini 5µm C-18 (150 × 4.6 mm) analytical column with gradient and flow-rate as described in Section 5.1. Detection was monitored at λ = 220 nm and 280 nm using a Dionex HPLC system (Section 5.1).
6 References


Lee, C.; Gibson, N. W. DNA interstrand cross-links induced by the cyclopropylpyrroloindole antitumor agent bizelesin are reversible upon exposure to alkali. *Biochemistry* **1993**, *32*, 9108-9114.


