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# Synthesis, Evaluation and Immobilisation of Anion Sensors Based on the 4-amino-1,8-naphthalimide Fluorophore

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A thesis submitted for fulfilment of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

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# Declaration

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“I certify this thesis does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another, except where due reference is made in the text”.

Andrew J. Blok

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# Acknowledgements

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# Summary

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Molecules based on the 4-amino-1,8-naphthalimide fluorophore combined with powerful urea and thiourea recognition units have been shown to be excellent sensors for anions including dihydrogen phosphate, acetate and fluoride. The majority of the literature with regards to these particular sensors however reports solution phase sensing. This thesis details the synthesis of a series of sensors based on the combination of the 4-amino-1,8-naphthalimide fluorophore and a urea recognition unit, incorporating a terminal double bond at the imide position. This terminal double bond can then be used to immobilise the sensors onto a silica surface, broadening the potential applications of this sensing technology.

The synthesis of eight different sensors each containing the 4-amino-1,8-naphthalimide fluorophore and a urea or thiourea recognition group is described. The fluorophore and the recognition group are connected covalently *via* a spacer molecule, with the use of three different spacer molecules investigated; 2-aminobenzylamine, 4-aminobenzylamine and 3-aminobenzylamine. Previous literature reports had indicated that small changes in the sensor molecule influenced the properties of the sensors towards different anions. Several changes to the recognition group were also investigated (urea vs. thiourea, addition of a chloro group on the phenyl ring attached to the recognition group, introduction of triethoxysilyl groups to enable a different method of immobilisation).

The use of microwave irradiation as an alternative to conventional heating methods was also trialled for the synthesis of three of the sensors. Reaction time was decreased, whilst in some cases purity and yield were also improved. In one step the reaction time was reduced from forty-eight hours to sixty minutes, whilst in another a product was able to be purified using recrystallisation, whereas column chromatography was usually required when using conventional heating techniques.

After successful synthesis of the sensors, their ability to sense anions (dihydrogen phosphate, acetate, fluoride and bromide) was monitored in the solution phase using

both fluorescence spectrophotometry and  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectroscopy. Strong interactions were observed upon addition of both dihydrogen phosphate and acetate to a solution of sensor in DMSO, with quenching of the fluorescent emission signal observed and also significant downfield shifts for the resonances assigned to the urea protons of each sensor in the  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum. Significant shifts were also observed for the 4-amino NH proton resonance dependant on the sensor being evaluated. Little quenching or changes in the  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum were observed upon addition of bromide to a solution of sensor. The most interesting results were obtained upon the addition of fluoride, with a colour change from yellow to red as greater amounts of fluoride were added due to deprotonation of the 4-amino NH proton. Again significant changes were noted in the  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of each sensor.

Finally after establishing the sensors were suitable for the detection of anions, immobilisation onto a silica surface was investigated. Initially the terminal double bond included in the sensor design was used to covalently attach the sensor to a hydride modified silica gel using hydrosilation chemistry. Definitive spectroscopic characterisation of the surface was hard to obtain, however deprotonation of the 4-amino NH proton by addition of fluoride to the surface was observed, suggesting successful attachment. Alternative immobilisation methods including building the sensor onto a 3-aminopropyl functionalised silica surface and by condensing triethoxysilyl groups (introduced in three of the sensors as part of the recognition unit) onto mesoporous silica were also investigated, proving that immobilisation of the sensors onto a silica surface is viable and may be an alternative to solution phase sensing.

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Declaration</b> .....	<b>I</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>II</b>
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>III</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>V</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>X</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>XIV</b>
<b>List of Schemes</b> .....	<b>XVII</b>
<b>Abbreviations and Symbols</b> .....	<b>XX</b>
<b>Summary of Host Molecules</b> .....	<b>XXIII</b>
<b>Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview.....	2
1.2 Traditional anion detection methods.....	2
1.3 Supramolecular Chemistry .....	4
1.3.1 Building an Anion Sensor .....	8
1.3.2 Choosing the recognition subunit.....	12
1.3.3 Choosing the signalling subunit .....	13
1.3.4 Naphthalimide based sensors.....	19
1.4 Immobilisation strategies.....	29
1.5 Proposal.....	34
1.5.1 Step (i) Synthesis and Characterisation of Anion Sensors .....	35
1.5.2 Step (ii) Evaluation of synthesised sensors.....	38
1.5.3 Step (iii) Immobilisation of sensor on to a silica surface .....	38
1.6 Conclusion .....	39
<b>Chapter 2 EXPERIMENTAL</b> .....	<b>40</b>
2.1 General Laboratory Exercises.....	41

2.2	Characterisation of synthesised compounds .....	42
2.2.1	Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy .....	42
2.2.2	Mass Spectrometry/Accurate Mass Analysis.....	43
2.2.3	Other Characterisation.....	43
2.3	Characterisation of Immobilised Compounds.....	43
2.4	Evaluation of Synthesised Sensors .....	44
2.4.1	UV-Visible Spectrophotometry .....	44
2.4.2	<sup>1</sup> H NMR Spectroscopy Titrations.....	45
2.4.3	Fluorescence Spectrophotometry Titrations .....	45
2.5	Synthetic Procedures.....	49
2.6	Immobilisation Procedures .....	62
2.6.1	Approach 1 – Hydrosilation via the terminal double bond .....	62
2.6.2	Approach 2- Build the sensor on aminopropyl silica .....	62
2.6.3	Approach 3 – Siloxane linkage through triethoxy groups.....	63
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>SYNTHESIS – CONVENTIONAL HEATING .....</b>	<b>65</b>
3.1	Synthesis of Fluorescent Anion Sensors.....	66
3.2	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>45</b> ).....	68
3.3	Attachment of the spacer to <i>N</i> -allyl-4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>45</b> ) .....	72
3.3.1	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>51</b> ).....	72
3.3.2	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>50</b> ).....	74
3.3.3	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>52</b> ).....	77
3.4	Incorporation of the recognition unit .....	78
3.4.1	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ).....	78
3.4.2	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>4</b> ).....	83
3.4.3	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>5</b> ).....	85

3.4.4	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylthioureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>2</b> ).....	86
3.4.5	Attempted synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -phenylthioureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>62</b> ) .....	90
3.4.6	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -4-chlorophenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>3</b> ).....	91
3.4.7	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>6</b> ) .....	93
3.4.8	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>7</b> ) .....	94
3.4.9	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>8</b> ) .....	95
3.5	Conclusions.....	96
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>SYNTHESIS – MICROWAVE IRRADIATION.....</b>	<b>99</b>
4.1	Microwave Chemistry.....	100
4.2	Synthesis of the fluorophore ( <b>45</b> ) .....	104
4.3	Addition of the spacer .....	106
4.3.1	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>51</b> )... ..	106
4.3.2	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>50</b> )... ..	108
4.3.3	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>52</b> )... ..	110
4.4	Incorporation of the recognition unit .....	111
4.4.1	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ).....	111
4.4.2	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>4</b> ).....	112
4.4.3	Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>5</b> ).....	114
4.5	Conclusion .....	115
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>SENSOR EVALUATION.....</b>	<b>117</b>



5.1	General .....	118
5.1.1	Job plot determined by UV-Visible spectrophotometry.....	119
5.1.2	Binding constant determination by <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectroscopy .....	119
5.1.3	Binding constant determination by fluorescence spectrophotometry ..	120
5.2	Sensor Evaluation .....	121
5.2.1	<i>N</i> -Allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ).....	121
5.2.2	Evaluation of other synthesised sensors .....	132
5.3	Conclusions.....	143
<b>Chapter 6 IMMOBILISATION OF NAPHTHALIMIDE SENSORS ONTO A SILICA SURFACE.....</b>		<b>145</b>
6.1	Introduction.....	146
6.2	Immobilisation through the terminal double bond .....	149
6.2.1	Immobilisation onto hydride modified silica gel.....	149
6.3	Immobilisation onto 3-aminopropyl functionalised silica.....	157
6.3.1	Formation of naphthalimide functionalised silica ( <b>56</b> ).....	158
6.3.2	Reaction of <b>56</b> with 4-aminobenzylamine to form <b>57</b> .....	161
6.3.3	Reaction of <b>57</b> with phenyl isocyanate to form <b>58</b> .....	163
6.4	Incorporation of silyl groups in the sensor molecule.....	165
6.4.1	Immobilisation of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>6</b> ) – silica particle .....	165
6.4.2	Formation of mesoporous silica.....	166
6.4.3	Immobilisation of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>6</b> ) – mesoporous silica .....	166
6.4.4	Immobilisation of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>7</b> ) – mesoporous silica .....	168
6.4.5	Immobilisation of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>8</b> ) – mesoporous silica .....	170
6.5	Conclusion .....	171

<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK .....</b>	<b>173</b>
7.1	Conclusions.....	174
7.1.1	Synthesis of 4-amino-1,8-naphthalimide based anion sensors.....	174
7.1.2	Evaluation of 4-amino-1,8-naphthalimide based anion sensors .....	176
7.1.3	Immobilisation of 4-amino-1,8-naphthalimide based sensors onto silica .....	177
7.2	Future Work .....	178
7.2.1	Synthesis .....	179
7.2.2	Evaluation.....	180
7.2.3	Immobilisation .....	180
<b>Appendix A</b> .....		<b>182</b>
<b>Appendix B</b> .....		<b>184</b>
<b>Appendix C</b> .....		<b>186</b>
<b>Reference List</b> .....		<b>194</b>

# List of Figures

---

Figure 1: Generalised structure of a host-guest interaction, with the host indicated by the red semi-circle and the guest by the blue circle.....	4
Figure 2: Speciation diagram for Phosphate.....	6
Figure 3: Conformational change in a katapinand on binding of an anion. ....	6
Figure 4: Structure of the amino acid residue Arginine. The guanidinium group is circled and then it is highlighted how an anion is able to form two hydrogen bonds with the protonated guanidinium moiety.....	8
Figure 5: A sensor containing the binding site integrated within the signalling unit. ....	10
Figure 6: A sensor containing a fluorophore and receptor joined using a covalent spacer [39].....	10
Figure 7: Mechanisms for fluorescence quenching. ....	11
Figure 8: (a) A urea functional group interacting with an oxo-anion, (b) urea functional group interacting with a spherical anion [32].....	12
Figure 9: Urea containing compound <b>15</b> (shown in black) interacting with a phosphonate anion (shown in red) [45]. ....	13
Figure 10: Fluorescence spectrum ( $\lambda_{ex}=370$ nm) of host <b>14</b> in DMSO upon addition of tetrabutylammonium fluoride (0→32mM) [3].....	15
Figure 11: Graph showing the relative intensity of the fluorescence emission spectrum at 419 nm of host <b>14</b> in DMSO, versus the log of anion concentration upon addition of tetrabutylammonium acetate (◆), tetrabutylammonium dihydrogen phosphate (×), tetrabutylammonium fluoride (*), tetrabutylammonium chloride (▲) and tetrabutylammonium bromide (■) [3]. ....	16
Figure 12: Stylised mechanism for the involvement of ATP in the aggregation of <b>23</b> and <b>24</b> . <b>23</b> is represented by the yellow oval with boronate group, whilst the polycation <b>24</b> is represented by the positively charged surface. Image reproduced from Kanekiyo and co-workers [47]. ....	19
Figure 13: Generalised structure of 1,8-naphthalimide, where $R_1$ is the substituent at the 4-position and $R_2$ a substituent at the 3-position. For 1,8-naphthalimide, $R_1=R_2=H$ . ....	20
Figure 14: Nitrofurantoin interacting with surface immobilised <i>N</i> -Allyl-4-( <i>N</i> -2'-hydroxyethyl)amino-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>25</b> ).....	30

Figure 15: Generalised structure of a sensor based on the fluorophore - spacer - receptor concept. When the anion interacts at the receptor site, the fluorophore emission is switched off. ....	66
Figure 16: Molecular orbital energy diagrams showing the relative energetic dispositions of the orbitals of the fluorophore and the receptor both before and after interaction with an anionic species. ....	67
Figure 17: General scheme for the hydrosilation process, where R represents the naphthalimide sensor and Y represents either H or OH depending on the extent of conversion of the silica.....	67
Figure 18: <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectrum of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ) (Original Spectrum, protons of interest highlighted).....	81
Figure 19: <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectrum of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ) (Changed Spectrum, protons of interest highlighted). ....	81
Figure 20: <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectrum of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ) at different concentrations. A=1 mg/mL, B=2.5 mg/mL, C=10 mg/mL, D=15 mg/mL.....	82
Figure 21: Chemical structures of the triethoxysilyl naphthalimide sensors with the receptor in the <i>para</i> ( <b>6</b> ), <i>ortho</i> ( <b>7</b> ) and <i>meta</i> ( <b>8</b> ) positions. ....	92
Figure 22: Stacked <sup>1</sup> H NMR (400 MHz) spectra of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>45</b> ) synthesised by microwave heating methods (top) or conventional heating methods (bottom).....	105
Figure 23: Example titration curve for the determination of a binding constant using <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectroscopy. ....	120
Figure 24: Binding curve obtained using fluorescence spectrophotometry. ....	121
Figure 25: Job plot for <b>1</b> and dihydrogen phosphate in DMSO. ....	122
Figure 26: Colorimetric response observed upon addition of fluoride to <b>1</b> in DMSO..	122
Figure 27: Colorimetric response observed upon addition of methanol to a solution of <b>1</b> complexed with fluoride in DMSO. ....	123
Figure 28: Stacked <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectra of the interaction observed between fluoride and <b>1</b> in DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> .The urea proton resonances are marked with a blue circle, whilst the 4-amino proton resonance is marked by a red star.....	124

Figure 29: $^1\text{H}$ NMR spectra of the interaction observed dihydrogen phosphate and <b>1</b> in hydrated DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> . The urea proton resonances are marked with a blue circle, whilst the 4-amino proton resonance is marked by a red star. ....	125
Figure 30: Binding curve for the complexation observed between <b>1</b> and dihydrogen phosphate determined by $^1\text{H}$ NMR spectroscopy. ....	126
Figure 31: Fluorescence emission spectrum of <b>1</b> in hydrated DMSO. $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 503.9$ nm. ....	129
Figure 32: Fluorescence emission spectra observed for the complex formed between <b>1</b> and dihydrogen phosphate ( $\lambda_{\text{ex}}=503.9$ nm).....	130
Figure 33: Structures of sensors <b>1</b> , <b>4</b> and <b>5</b> .....	134
Figure 34: Structures of sensors <b>1</b> and <b>3</b> , highlighting the position of the electron withdrawing chloro group in <b>3</b> .....	138
Figure 35: Structures of sensors <b>6</b> , <b>7</b> and <b>8</b> .....	140
Figure 36: Stacked $^1\text{H}$ NMR spectra of the interaction observed between various equivalents (from top to bottom 10, 5, 1, 0.1 and 0 equivalents) of dihydrogen phosphate (TBA salt) and sensor <b>6</b> in hydrated DMSO.....	142
Figure 37: Generalised pathways used for immobilisation of naphthalimide sensors.....	149
Figure 38: FTIR spectrum of hydride modified silica gel <b>53</b> . ....	151
Figure 39: FTIR spectrum of unmodified silica gel. ....	151
Figure 40: Solid state $^{13}\text{C}$ - $^1\text{H}$ CP-MAS NMR spectrum of hydride silica modified with <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide, <b>54</b> . ....	153
Figure 41: Designation of the different condensation states of silica. ....	154
Figure 42: Solid state $^{29}\text{Si}$ NMR spectrum of hydride silica modified with <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide, <b>54</b> . ....	154
Figure 43: FTIR spectrum of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ).....	155
Figure 44: FTIR spectrum of hydride modified silica reacted with <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide, <b>54</b> .....	155
Figure 45: Addition of Fluoride (TBA salt) in DMSO to sensor modified silica, <b>54</b> (top) and addition of methanol (bottom).....	157
Figure 46: Overlaid FTIR spectra of 3-aminopropyl functionalised silica reacted with 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalic anhydride ( <b>56</b> , black) and 3-aminopropyl functionalised silica (blue). ....	159

Figure 47: Stackplot solid state $^{13}\text{C}$ NMR spectra of (bottom) 3-aminopropyl functionalised silica gel (obtained from Sigma Aldrich), (middle) 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalic anhydride ( <b>44</b> ) starting material and (top) 3-aminopropyl functionalised silica modified with 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalic anhydride <b>56</b> . .....	160
Figure 48: Overlaid FTIR spectra of 3-aminopropyl functionalised silica reacted with 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalic anhydride to form <b>56</b> (shown in blue) and <b>56</b> reacted with 4-aminobenzylamine to form <b>57</b> (shown in black). .....	162
Figure 49: Stackplot solid state $^{13}\text{C}$ - $^1\text{H}$ (CP-MAS) NMR spectra showing (bottom) naphthalimide functionalised silica <b>56</b> and (top) naphthalimide functionalised silica reacted with 4-aminobenzylamine <b>57</b> . .....	162
Figure 50: Overlaid $^{13}\text{C}$ - $^1\text{H}$ (CPMAS) solid state NMR spectra of <b>57</b> (blue) and <b>58</b> (red). .....	164
Figure 51: FTIR spectra of mesoporous silica (black), mesoporous silica refluxed in DMSO (blue) and mesoporous silica with <b>6</b> attached ( <b>59</b> ) (green). .....	167
Figure 52: Stacked solid state $^{29}\text{Si}$ (CP-MAS) spectra of, unbound 4-triethoxysilyl sensor <b>6</b> (bottom), mesoporous silica (middle) and <b>6</b> bound on mesoporous silica <b>59</b> (top). .....	168
Figure 53: Stacked solid state $^{29}\text{Si}$ (CP-MAS) spectra of, of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -propylureidotriethoxysilyl)benzylamino-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>7</b> ) (top) and <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -propylureidotriethoxysilyl)benzylamino-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>7</b> ), immobilised onto mesoporous silica <b>60</b> (bottom). .....	169
Figure 54: Stacked solid state $^{29}\text{Si}$ (CP-MAS) spectra of, of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -propylureidotriethoxysilyl)benzylamino-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>8</b> ) (top) and <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -propylureidotriethoxysilyl)benzylamino-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>8</b> ), immobilised onto mesoporous silica <b>61</b> (bottom). .....	170

# List of Tables

---

Table 1: Comparison of Hosts <b>14</b> , <b>19</b> and <b>20</b> and their interaction with various anions (0 to 32 mM anion added) [3].	16
Table 2: Fluorescent enhancement seen in host molecules <b>21</b> and <b>22</b> upon addition of various anions in 100 times excess in methanol [46].	17
Table 3: Binding constants ( $\log \beta$ ) for the interaction of <b>27</b> and <b>28</b> with various anions as determined by fluorescence spectrophotometry [51].	22
Table 4: Details of solutions made for Job plot experiments.	45
Table 5: Addition of guest to host, amount of equivalents added per addition of guest for $^1\text{H}$ NMR spectroscopy experiments.	46
Table 6: Wavelengths utilised for fluorescence spectrophotometry titration experiments.	47
Table 7: Addition of guest to host, amount of equivalents added per addition of guest for fluorescence spectrophotometry experiments.	48
Table 8: Comparison of reaction time and yield using conventional and microwave heating methods for the addition of the 4-amino group to the fluorophore.	111
Table 9: Summary of products synthesised using microwave irradiation, and details comparing to the synthesis <i>via</i> conventional heating.	115
Table 10: Chemical shift ( $\delta$ ) (ppm) observed upon addition of dihydrogen phosphate to <b>1</b> in hydrated DMSO- $\text{d}_6$ .	125
Table 11: Chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>1</b> in hydrated DMSO- $\text{d}_6$ .	127
Table 12: Binding constants ( $\log K$ ) for the complexation of <b>1</b> with anions as determined by $^1\text{H}$ NMR spectroscopy in hydrated DMSO- $\text{d}_6$ .	127
Table 13: Percentage fluorescence quenching observed for <b>1</b> upon addition of various anions in hydrated DMSO.	130
Table 14: Binding constants for the complexation of <b>1</b> with anions determined by fluorescence spectrophotometry in hydrated DMSO.	130
Table 15: Binding constants for sensors <b>1</b> , <b>3-8</b> determined by $^1\text{H}$ NMR spectroscopy and fluorescence spectrophotometry.	133

Table 16: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>4</b> in hydrated DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> .....	134
Table 17: Fluorescent quenching observed of <b>4</b> upon addition of anion, in hydrated DMSO. ....	135
Table 18: Summary of products synthesised using microwave irradiation, and details comparing the synthesis <i>via</i> conventional heating. ....	176
Table 19: Binding constants for sensors <b>1</b> , <b>3-8</b> determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectroscopy and fluorescence spectrophotometry. ....	176
Table 20: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>1</b> in DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> with 0.5% water. ....	187
Table 21: Fluorescent quenching observed (as a % of the original signal before addition of guest) of <b>1</b> upon addition of anion, in DMSO with 0.5% water .....	187
Table 22: Binding constants (log <i>K</i> ) for the complexation of <b>1</b> with various dihydrogen phosphate and acetate as determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR and fluorescence. ....	187
Table 23: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>3</b> in hydrated DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> .....	188
Table 24: Fluorescent quenching observed (as a % of the original signal before addition of guest) of <b>3</b> upon addition of anion, in hydrated DMSO.....	188
Table 25: Binding constants (log <i>K</i> ) for the complexation of <b>3</b> with various dihydrogen phosphate and acetate as determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR and fluorescence. ....	188
Table 26: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>4</b> in DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> with 0.5% water. ....	189
Table 27: Fluorescent quenching observed (as a % of the original signal before addition of guest) of <b>4</b> upon addition of anion, in DMSO with 0.5% water .....	189
Table 28: Binding constants (log <i>K</i> ) for the complexation of <b>4</b> with various dihydrogen phosphate and acetate as determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR and fluorescence. ....	189
Table 29: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>5</b> in hydrated DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> .....	190
Table 30: Fluorescent quenching observed (as a % of the original signal before addition of guest) of <b>5</b> upon addition of anion, in hydrated DMSO.....	190
Table 31: Binding constants (log <i>K</i> ) for the complexation of <b>5</b> with various dihydrogen phosphate and acetate as determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR and fluorescence. ....	190



Table 32: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>6</b> in hydrated DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> .....	191
Table 33: Fluorescent quenching observed (as a % of the original signal before addition of guest) of <b>6</b> upon addition of anion, in hydrated DMSO. ....	191
Table 34: Binding constants (log <i>K</i> ) for the complexation of <b>6</b> with various dihydrogen phosphate and acetate as determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR and fluorescence.....	191
Table 35: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>7</b> in hydrated DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> .....	192
Table 36: Fluorescent quenching observed (as a % of the original signal before addition of guest) of <b>7</b> upon addition of anion, in hydrated DMSO.....	192
Table 37: Binding constants (log <i>K</i> ) for the complexation of <b>7</b> with various dihydrogen phosphate and acetate as determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR and fluorescence. ....	192
Table 38: Changes in chemical shift (ppm) observed upon addition of ten equivalents of anion to <b>8</b> in hydrated DMSO-d <sub>6</sub> .....	193
Table 39: Fluorescent quenching observed (as a % of the original signal before addition of guest) of <b>8</b> upon addition of anion, in hydrated DMSO. ....	193
Table 40: Binding constants (log <i>K</i> ) for the complexation of <b>8</b> with various dihydrogen phosphate and acetate as determined by <sup>1</sup> H NMR and fluorescence.....	193

# List of Schemes

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Scheme 1: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -Allyl-4-( <i>N</i> -2'-hydroxyethyl)amino-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>25</b> ) by Niu and co-workers [48].....	30
Scheme 2: General scheme for the organosilisation process. Where $n=1-3$ and $Y=H$ or $Si(OSi)_2R$ depending on the extent that cross linking occurs [13]. .....	33
Scheme 3: General scheme for the silanisation process. Where $n=1-3$ and $Y=H$ or $Si(OSi)_2R$ depending on the extent that cross linking occurs. The typical acid source used is hydrochloric acid.....	34
Scheme 4: General scheme for the hydrosilation process. Where $Y=H$ or $Si(OSi)_2R$ depending on the extent that cross linking occurs. The catalysts commonly used include metal complexes such as hexachloroplatinic acid or free radical initiators such as tert-butyl peroxide.....	34
Scheme 5: Proposed synthetic pathway for the synthesis of sensors based on the 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide fluorophore. ....	35
Scheme 6: Synthetic pathway for the synthesis of sensors based on the 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide fluorophore.....	68
Scheme 7: Synthesis of 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>49</b> ).....	69
Scheme 8: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>45</b> ). ....	70
Scheme 9: Single step synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>45</b> ). ....	72
Scheme 10: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>51</b> ).....	73
Scheme 11: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>50</b> ).....	74
Scheme 12: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>52</b> ).....	77
Scheme 13: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ). ....	79
Scheme 14: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>4</b> ). ....	83
Scheme 15: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>5</b> ). ....	85
Scheme 16: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylthioureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>2</b> ).....	86

Scheme 17: Attempted synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -phenylthioureido)-benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>62</b> ) from <b>50</b> .....	90
Scheme 18: Synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -4-chloro-phenylureido)-benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>3</b> ) from <b>51</b> .....	91
Scheme 19: Reaction between <b>51</b> and 3-(triethoxysilyl)propyl isocyanate to form <b>6</b> ..	93
Scheme 20: Reaction between <b>50</b> and 3-(triethoxysilyl)propyl isocyanate to form <b>7</b> ..	95
Scheme 21: Reaction between <b>52</b> and 3-(triethoxysilyl)propyl isocyanate to form <b>8</b> ..	96
Scheme 22: Synthetic pathway for the synthesis of sensors based on the 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide fluorophore, using microwave irradiation techniques.....	101
Scheme 23: <i>N</i> -carboxyalkyl maleimides ( <b>66-70</b> ) and <i>N</i> -substituted phthalimides (71-72) synthesised by Borah <i>et al.</i> [111].....	102
Scheme 24: <i>N</i> -substituted phthalimides ( <b>73-75</b> ) synthesised by Chandrasekhar and co-workers [112]. .....	103
Scheme 25: <i>N</i> -Phenyl-2,4,-dinitroaniline synthesised by Elder and Holtz [114]. .....	103
Scheme 26: Generalised reaction between a resin embedded amine and an isocyanate by Yu and co—workers [115]. .....	104
Scheme 27: Microwave synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-bromo-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>45</b> ).....	104
Scheme 28: Microwave synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>51</b> ) .....	106
Scheme 29: Microwave synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>50</b> ) .....	108
Scheme 30: Microwave synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-aminobenzylamine)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>52</b> ) .....	110
Scheme 31: Microwave synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ).....	111
Scheme 32: Microwave synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(2-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>4</b> ).....	112
Scheme 33: Microwave synthesis of <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(3-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>5</b> ).....	114
Scheme 34: General scheme for the organosilisation process. Where n=1-3 and Y=H or Si(OSi) <sub>2</sub> R depending on the extent that cross linking occurs [13]. .....	147

Scheme 35: General scheme for the silanisation process. Where $n=1-3$ and $Y=H$ or $Si(OSi)_2R$ depending on the extent that cross linking occurs. The typical acid source used is hydrochloric acid [13]. .....	147
Scheme 36: General scheme for the hydrosilation process. Where $Y=H$ or $Si(OSi)_2R$ depending on the extent that cross linking occurs. The catalysts commonly used include metal complexes such as hexachloroplatinic acid or free radical initiators such as tert-butyl peroxide [12]. .....	148
Scheme 37: Reaction between silica gel and triethoxysilane to create hydride modified silica gel ( <b>53</b> ).....	150
Scheme 38: Reaction between <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>1</b> ) where $X=O$ or <i>N</i> -allyl-4-(4-( <i>N</i> -phenylthioureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide ( <b>2</b> ) where $X=S$ and hydride modified silica. ....	151
Scheme 39: Reaction between 4-bromo-1,8-naphthalic anhydride ( <b>44</b> ) and 3-aminopropyl-functionalised silica .....	157
Scheme 40: Reaction between naphthalimide functionalised silica <b>56</b> with 4-amionbenzylamine to form <b>57</b> .....	161
Scheme 41: Reaction between amino naphthalimide modified silica <b>57</b> and phenyl isocyanate to form <b>58</b> . ....	163
Scheme 42: Generalised Host Guest Reaction.....	184

# Abbreviations and Symbols

Abbreviation, Symbol or Unit	Explanation
°C	Degrees Celsius
<sup>13</sup> C	Carbon-13
<sup>19</sup> F	Fluorine-19
<sup>1</sup> H	Proton (Hydrogen-1)
<sup>29</sup> Si	Silicon-29
Å	Angstrom
AcO <sup>-</sup>	Acetate
ADP	Adenosine diphosphate
AMP	Adenosine monophosphate
API	Atmospheric Pressure Ionization
AR	Analytical Reagent
ATP	Adenosine 5'-triphosphate
ATR	Attenuated total reflectance
Br <sup>-</sup>	Bromide
bs	Broad singlet
cf.	Compared with
CE	Capillary Electrophoresis
CH <sub>3</sub> COO <sup>-</sup>	Acetate
Cl <sup>-</sup>	Chloride
cm	Centimetre
cm <sup>-1</sup>	Wavenumbers
cm <sup>3</sup>	Cubic centimetres
CO <sub>3</sub> <sup>2-</sup>	Carbonate
COSY	Correlation Spectroscopy
CP-MAS	Cross Polarisation – Magic Angle Spinning
CPTS	3-chloropropyltrimethoxysilane
C-TAB	Cetyl Trimethyl Ammonium Bromide
d	Doublet
dATP	Deoxyadenosine triphosphate
DMF	Dimethylformamide
DMSO	Dimethyl sulfoxide
DMSO-d <sub>6</sub>	Deuterated dimethyl sulfoxide
dq	Doublet of quartets
dt	Doublet of triplets
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
ESI	Electrospray Ionisation
EtOH	Ethanol
F <sup>-</sup>	Fluoride
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FTIR	Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy
g	Grams
G	Guest

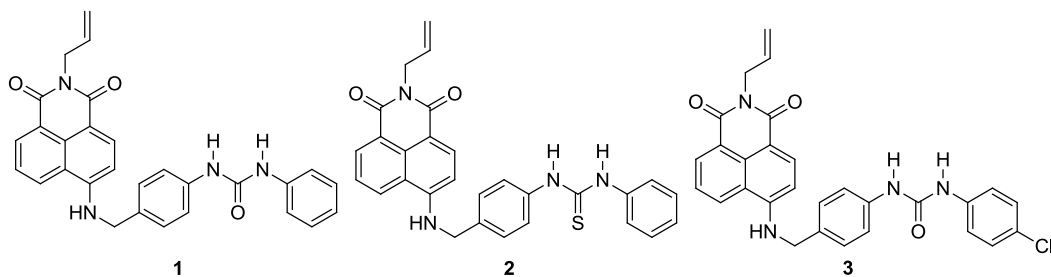
## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GR	Guaranteed Reagent
h	Hours
H	Host
Hz	Hertz
H <sub>2</sub> O	Water
H <sub>2</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup>	Dihydrogen Phosphate
HCO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup>	Bicarbonate
HDMS	High Definition Mass Spectrometry
HF <sub>2</sub> <sup>-</sup>	Bifluoride
HG	Host-Guest complex
HMBC	Heteronuclear Multiple-Bond Correlation
HMQC	Heteronuclear Multiple-Quantum Correlation
HOMO	Highest Occupied Molecular Orbital
HPLC	High Performance Liquid Chromatography
HPMA	2-hydroxypropyl methacrylate
HPO <sub>4</sub> <sup>2-</sup>	Monohydrogen Phosphate
HSO <sub>4</sub> <sup>-</sup>	Hydrogen Sulfate
I	Intensity
i.e.	<i>id est</i> (that is)
I <sub>0</sub>	Initial Intensity
IC	Ion Chromatography
ICT	Internal Charge Transfer
K	Binding constant
K <sup>+</sup>	Potassium Ion
KBr	Potassium Bromide
kHz	Kilohertz
kJ.mol <sup>-1</sup>	Kilojoule/mol
lb	Line broadening
Lit.	Literature
λ <sub>max</sub>	Maximum wavelength
Log	Logarithmic
m	Multiplet
m.p.	Melting point
m/z	Mass to charge ratio
MAS	Magic Angle Spinning
Me	Methyl
MeCN	Acetonitrile
mg/mL	Milligram
µg/mL	Micrograms per millilitre
mg/mL	Milligrams per millilitre
MHz	Megahertz
min	Minutes
mL	Millilitres
µL	Microlitres
mM	Millimolar
µm	Micrometre
mm	Millimetre
mol.L <sup>-1</sup>	Moles per litre

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ms</b>	Milliseconds
<b>μs</b>	Microseconds
<b>MW</b>	Microwave
<b>N</b>	Newtons
<b>N/A</b>	Not available
<b>nm</b>	Nanometre
<b>NMR</b>	Nuclear Magnetic Resonance
<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b>	Nitrogen Dioxide
<b>NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup></b>	Nitrate
<b>ODTMA</b>	Octadecyltrimethyl ammonium bromide
<b>PET</b>	Photoinduced Electron Transfer
<b>Ph</b>	Phenyl
<b>ppm</b>	Parts Per Million
<b>PTFE</b>	Polytetrafluoroethylene
<b>q</b>	Quartet
<b>quin</b>	Quintet
<b>rt</b>	Room temperature
<b>s</b>	Singlet
<b>Sec</b>	Seconds
<b>t</b>	Triplet
<b>TEA</b>	Triethylamine
<b>THF</b>	Tetrahydrofuran
<b>TLC</b>	Thin Layer Chromatography
<b>TSPM</b>	3-(trimethoxysilyl)propyl methacrylate
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>UV-Visible</b>	Ultraviolet-Visible
<b>v/v%</b>	Volume/Volume
<b>W</b>	Watts
<b>ZnSe</b>	Zinc Selenide
<b>ZrO<sub>2</sub></b>	Zirconium Dioxide

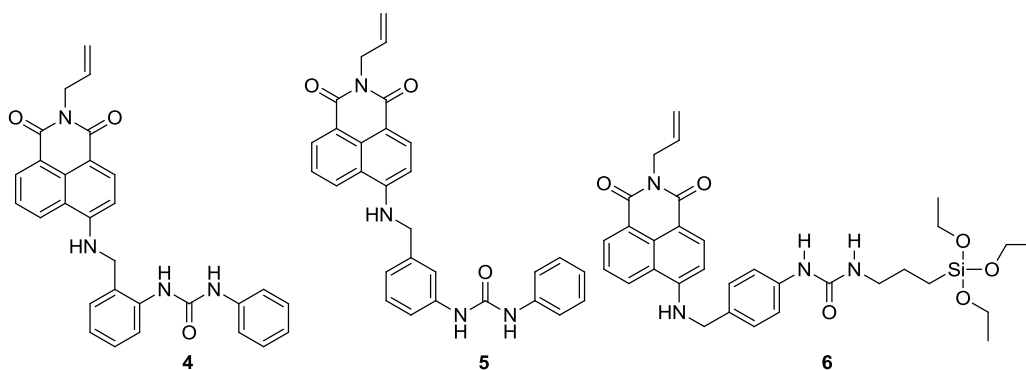
# Summary of Host Molecules



**N-Allyl-4-(4-(N-phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (1)**

**N-Allyl-4-(4-(N-phenylthioureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (2)**

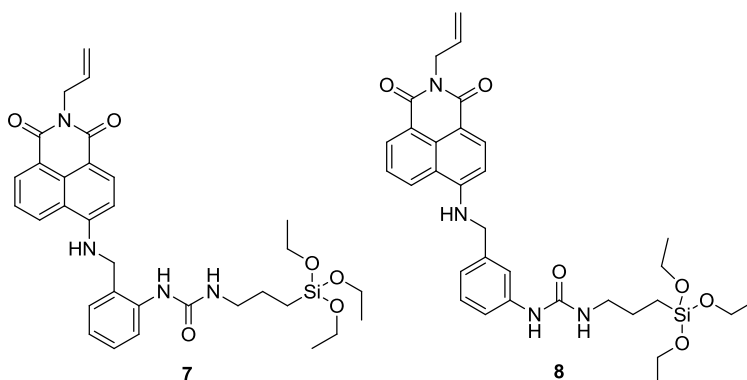
**N-Allyl-4-(4-(N-chlorophenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (3)**



**N-Allyl-4-(2-(N-phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (4)**

**N-Allyl-4-(3-(N-phenylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (5)**

**N-Allyl-4-(4-(N-3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (6)**



**N-Allyl-4-(2-(N-3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (7)**

**N-Allyl-4-(3-(N-3-(triethoxysilyl)propylureido)benzylamino)-1,8-naphthalimide (8)**