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#### Key indicators

Single-crystal X-ray study  
 $T = 150\text{ K}$   
 Mean  $\sigma(\text{C}-\text{C}) = 0.002\text{ \AA}$   
 $R$  factor = 0.041  
 $wR$  factor = 0.111  
 Data-to-parameter ratio = 17.0

For details of how these key indicators were automatically derived from the article, see <http://journals.iucr.org/e>.

## 3-Phenyl-1,5-di-2-pyridylpentane-1,5-dione

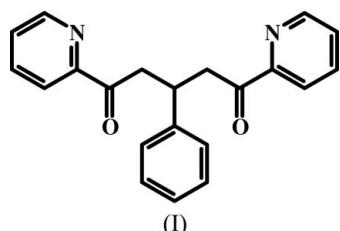
The title compound,  $C_{21}H_{18}N_2O_2$ , shows both  $\pi-\pi$  stacking of the pyridine groups and significant  $\text{C}-\text{H}\cdots\text{O}$  and  $\text{C}-\text{H}\cdots\text{N}$  hydrogen bonding.

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#### Comment

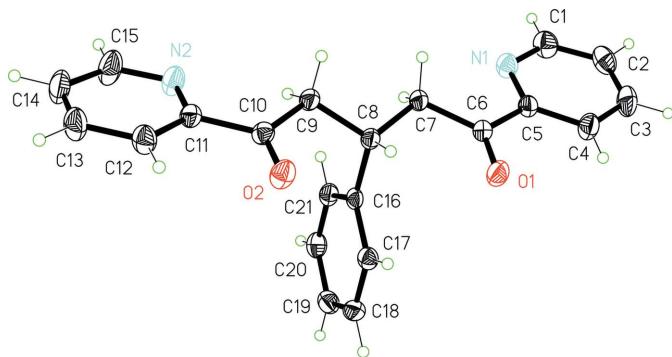
2,2':6',2''-Terpyridine and its derivatives have been widely used for complexation of transition metals (Gao *et al.*, 2003; Sharma *et al.*, 2005). In more recent times there has been a lot of interest in these ligands as synthetic building blocks for supramolecular structures (Hofmeier & Schubert, 2004). Multistep syntheses (Kröhnke, 1976; Collin *et al.*, 1996), as well as single-step approaches for these ligands, have been developed (Tu *et al.*, 2005).

The title compound, (I), is a synthetic intermediate for the compound 4'-phenyl-2,2':6',2''-terpyridine. The synthesis and characterization of the latter have been described previously along with other derivatives (Constable *et al.*, 1990; Moya *et al.*, 2001). The structure of the fluorinated analogue, 3-(4-fluorophenyl)pentane-1,5-bis(2-pyridyl)-1,5-dione, (II), has been reported previously (Constable *et al.*, 1998). A search of the CSD (Version 5.27) showed that no other members of this family have been structurally characterized (Allen, 2002; Fletcher *et al.*, 1996).

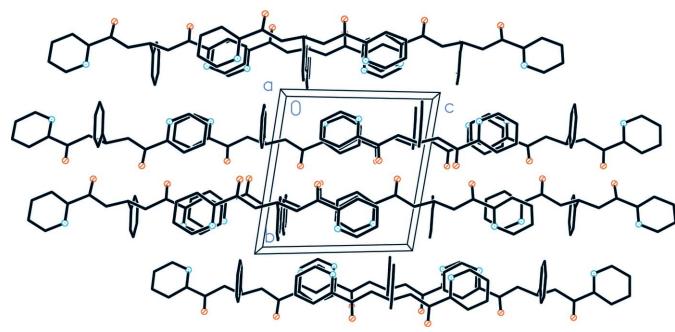


The structure of (I) is shown in Fig. 1. The mean planes of the two pyridine rings are inclined at  $11.26(7)^\circ$ . The phenyl ring, comprising C16–C21, is inclined by  $87.08(3)^\circ$  to the mean plane of the rest of the molecule. The fluorinated analogue (II) is essentially isomorphous with the present compound, the fluorinated phenyl group making no significant difference to the molecular packing. Constable *et al.* (1998) stated that there were neither stacking interactions nor significant short intermolecular contacts in the crystal structure of (II). We have perhaps taken a more liberal view, and observed both  $\pi-\pi$  stacking and  $\text{C}-\text{H}\cdots\text{O}/\text{N}$  hydrogen bonding in (I).

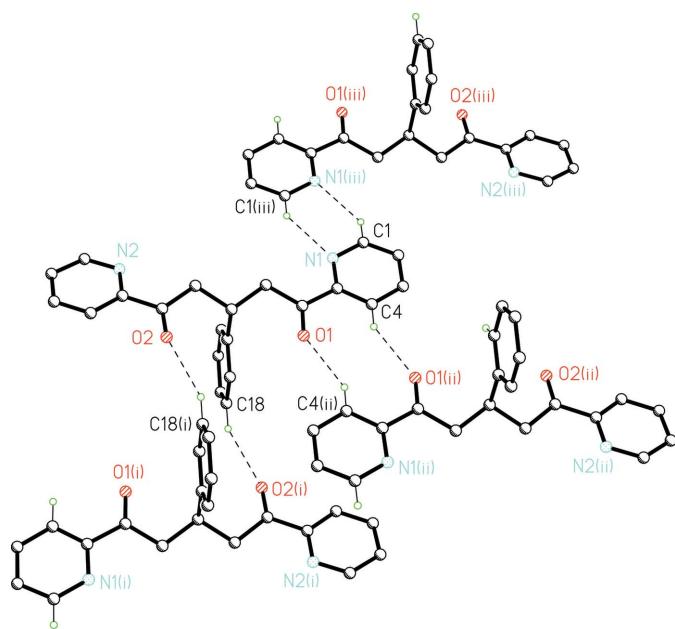
Fig. 2 shows a packing diagram, viewed perpendicular to the  $a$  axis and illustrates the  $\pi-\pi$  stacking of the pyridine rings, in which rings comprising N1/C1–C5 alternate with those comprising N2/C11–C15. As mentioned above, the rings are

**Figure 1**

The molecular structure of (I); displacement ellipsoids are drawn at the 50% probability level.

**Figure 2**

Packing diagram viewed down the  $a$  axis and showing  $\pi\cdots\pi$  stacking. H atoms have been omitted for clarity.

**Figure 3**

Intermolecular C–H $\cdots$ O and C–H $\cdots$ N hydrogen bonding (dashed lines). H atoms not involved in hydrogen bonding have been omitted for clarity. Symmetry codes as in Table 1.

inclined at 11.26 (7) $^\circ$ ; the centroid–centroid distance is 3.907 Å and the centroid of the N1/C1–C5 ring is 3.684 (1) Å

from the mean plane of the N2/C11–C15 ring under symmetry operation ( $-1 + x, y, -1 + z$ ).

Three sets of intermolecular hydrogen-bonding interactions are shown in Fig. 3 and listed in Table 1. Each of the interactions is paired by symmetry, giving rise to cyclic patterns which can be described as  $R_2^2$  (16),  $R_2^2$  (10) and  $R_2^2$  (6) for C18–H18 $\cdots$ O2<sup>i</sup>, C4–H4 $\cdots$ O1<sup>ii</sup> and C1–H1 $\cdots$ N1<sup>iii</sup>, respectively (Etter *et al.*, 1990). The  $D\cdots A$  distances and  $D–H\cdots A$  angles in these interactions are within the ranges generally observed for such weak hydrogen bonds (Desiraju & Steiner, 1999) and, collectively, they are likely to be responsible for the observed packing.

## Experimental

Compound (I) was synthesized as previously reported (Cave & Raston, 2001). The product was recrystallized at room temperature from a methanol–chloroform (1:1) mixture, yielding colourless crystals (m.p. 422–424 K).

### Crystal data

$C_{21}H_{18}N_2O_2$	$V = 836.74 (9)$ Å $^3$
$M_r = 330.37$	$Z = 2$
Triclinic, $P\bar{1}$	$D_x = 1.311$ Mg m $^{-3}$
$a = 8.3545 (5)$ Å	Mo $K\alpha$ radiation
$b = 10.3696 (7)$ Å	$\mu = 0.09$ mm $^{-1}$
$c = 10.6370 (7)$ Å	$T = 150 (2)$ K
$\alpha = 95.208 (1)$ $^\circ$	Block, colourless
$\beta = 110.924 (1)$ $^\circ$	$0.45 \times 0.42 \times 0.17$ mm
$\gamma = 99.762 (1)$ $^\circ$	

### Data collection

Bruker SMART APEX-II CCD diffractometer	8223 measured reflections
$\omega$ scans	3832 independent reflections
Absorption correction: multi-scan (SADABS; Sheldrick, 2003)	3149 reflections with $I > 2\sigma(I)$
$R_{\text{int}} = 0.019$	
$T_{\min} = 0.963$ , $T_{\max} = 0.986$	$\theta_{\max} = 27.5^\circ$

### Refinement

Refinement on $F^2$	$w = 1/[\sigma^2(F_o^2) + (0.0518P)^2 + 0.1695P]$
$R[F^2 > 2\sigma(F^2)] = 0.042$	where $P = (F_o^2 + 2F_c^2)/3$
$wR(F^2) = 0.111$	$(\Delta/\sigma)_{\max} < 0.001$
$S = 1.09$	$\Delta\rho_{\max} = 0.26$ e Å $^{-3}$
3832 reflections	$\Delta\rho_{\min} = -0.24$ e Å $^{-3}$
226 parameters	
H-atom parameters constrained	

**Table 1**  
Hydrogen-bond geometry (Å, °).

$D–H\cdots A$	$D–H$	$H\cdots A$	$D\cdots A$	$D–H\cdots A$
C18–H18 $\cdots$ O2 <sup>i</sup>	0.95	2.62	3.4913 (15)	153
C4–H4 $\cdots$ O1 <sup>ii</sup>	0.95	2.42	3.2556 (16)	146
C1–H1 $\cdots$ N1 <sup>iii</sup>	0.95	2.64	3.4588 (18)	145

Symmetry codes: (i)  $-x + 1, -y + 1, -z$ ; (ii)  $-x, -y + 1, -z - 1$ ; (iii)  $-x - 1, -y, -z - 1$ .

H atoms bonded to C and N were inserted at calculated positions and refined using a riding model. The constrained distances were 0.95, 0.99 and 1.00 Å for aryl, methylene and tertiary H atoms, respectively. They were assigned  $U_{\text{iso}}(\text{H}) = 1.2U_{\text{eq}}(\text{carrier atom})$ .

Data collection: *APEX2* (Bruker, 2005); cell refinement: *SAINT* (Bruker, 2005); data reduction: *SAINT*; program(s) used to solve structure: *SHELXS97* (Sheldrick, 1997); program(s) used to refine structure: *SHELXL97* (Sheldrick, 1997); molecular graphics: *SHELXTL* (Sheldrick, 2001); software used to prepare material for publication: *SHELXTL*.

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# supporting information

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#### Crystal data

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 $M_r = 330.37$   
Triclinic,  $P\bar{1}$   
 $a = 8.3545 (5) \text{ \AA}$   
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 $c = 10.6370 (7) \text{ \AA}$   
 $\alpha = 95.208 (1)^\circ$   
 $\beta = 110.924 (1)^\circ$   
 $\gamma = 99.762 (1)^\circ$   
 $V = 836.74 (9) \text{ \AA}^3$

$Z = 2$   
 $F(000) = 348$   
 $D_x = 1.311 \text{ Mg m}^{-3}$   
Mo  $K\alpha$  radiation,  $\lambda = 0.71073 \text{ \AA}$   
Cell parameters from 3056 reflections  
 $\theta = 2.7\text{--}31.5^\circ$   
 $\mu = 0.09 \text{ mm}^{-1}$   
 $T = 150 \text{ K}$   
Block, colourless  
 $0.45 \times 0.42 \times 0.17 \text{ mm}$

#### Data collection

Bruker SMART APEX-II CCD  
diffractometer  
Radiation source: fine-focus sealed tube  
Graphite monochromator  
 $\omega$  scans  
Absorption correction: multi-scan  
(SADABS; Sheldrick, 2003)  
 $T_{\min} = 0.963$ ,  $T_{\max} = 0.986$

8223 measured reflections  
3832 independent reflections  
3149 reflections with  $I > 2\sigma(I)$   
 $R_{\text{int}} = 0.019$   
 $\theta_{\max} = 27.5^\circ$ ,  $\theta_{\min} = 2.0^\circ$   
 $h = -10 \rightarrow 10$   
 $k = -13 \rightarrow 13$   
 $l = -13 \rightarrow 13$

#### Refinement

Refinement on  $F^2$   
Least-squares matrix: full  
 $R[F^2 > 2\sigma(F^2)] = 0.042$   
 $wR(F^2) = 0.111$   
 $S = 1.09$   
3832 reflections  
226 parameters  
0 restraints  
Primary atom site location: structure-invariant  
direct methods

Secondary atom site location: difference Fourier  
map  
Hydrogen site location: inferred from  
neighbouring sites  
H-atom parameters constrained  
 $w = 1/[\sigma^2(F_o^2) + (0.0518P)^2 + 0.1695P]$   
where  $P = (F_o^2 + 2F_c^2)/3$   
 $(\Delta/\sigma)_{\max} < 0.001$   
 $\Delta\rho_{\max} = 0.26 \text{ e \AA}^{-3}$   
 $\Delta\rho_{\min} = -0.24 \text{ e \AA}^{-3}$

#### Special details

**Experimental.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (300 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.60 (*d*,  $J = 4.9 \text{ Hz}$ , 2H), 7.92 (*d*,  $J = 5.8 \text{ Hz}$ , 2H), 7.75 (*t*,  $J = 7.6 \text{ Hz}$ , 2H), 7.42–7.34 (*m*, 4H), 7.24–7.19 (*m*, 2H), 7.13–7.08 (*m*, 1H), 4.14 (*quint*,  $J = 7.1 \text{ Hz}$ , 1H) 3.68 (*qd*, 4H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  C 199.93, 153.28, 148.74, 144.54, 136.94, 128.37, 127.73, 127.08, 126.33, 121.86, 44.18, 36.11.

**Geometry.** All e.s.d.'s (except the e.s.d. in the dihedral angle between two l.s. planes) are estimated using the full covariance matrix. The cell e.s.d.'s are taken into account individually in the estimation of e.s.d.'s in distances, angles and torsion angles; correlations between e.s.d.'s in cell parameters are only used when they are defined by crystal symmetry. An approximate (isotropic) treatment of cell e.s.d.'s is used for estimating e.s.d.'s involving l.s. planes.

**Refinement.** Refinement of  $F^2$  against ALL reflections. The weighted  $R$ -factor  $wR$  and goodness of fit  $S$  are based on  $F^2$ , conventional  $R$ -factors  $R$  are based on  $F$ , with  $F$  set to zero for negative  $F^2$ . The threshold expression of  $F^2 > \sigma(F^2)$  is used only for calculating  $R$ -factors(gt) etc. and is not relevant to the choice of reflections for refinement.  $R$ -factors based on  $F^2$  are statistically about twice as large as those based on  $F$ , and  $R$ -factors based on ALL data will be even larger.

*Fractional atomic coordinates and isotropic or equivalent isotropic displacement parameters ( $\text{\AA}^2$ )*

	$x$	$y$	$z$	$U_{\text{iso}}^*/U_{\text{eq}}$
N1	-0.35196 (14)	0.16135 (11)	-0.49191 (11)	0.0282 (2)
C1	-0.47378 (18)	0.11329 (14)	-0.61683 (14)	0.0342 (3)
H1	-0.5567	0.0336	-0.6289	0.041*
C2	-0.48469 (19)	0.17425 (14)	-0.72960 (13)	0.0344 (3)
H2	-0.5752	0.1380	-0.8160	0.041*
C3	-0.3633 (2)	0.28745 (15)	-0.71475 (13)	0.0360 (3)
H3	-0.3678	0.3303	-0.7908	0.043*
C4	-0.23359 (18)	0.33848 (14)	-0.58688 (13)	0.0309 (3)
H4	-0.1465	0.4159	-0.5735	0.037*
C5	-0.23508 (16)	0.27262 (12)	-0.47864 (12)	0.0228 (3)
C6	-0.10237 (15)	0.32889 (12)	-0.33738 (12)	0.0226 (3)
O1	0.01339 (12)	0.42531 (9)	-0.31951 (9)	0.0324 (2)
C7	-0.12369 (15)	0.26619 (12)	-0.21971 (11)	0.0214 (2)
H7A	-0.1441	0.1686	-0.2427	0.026*
H7B	-0.2278	0.2874	-0.2055	0.026*
C8	0.03857 (15)	0.31553 (11)	-0.08751 (11)	0.0196 (2)
H8	0.0724	0.4142	-0.0777	0.024*
C9	0.00051 (15)	0.28325 (12)	0.03820 (11)	0.0223 (3)
H9A	-0.1103	0.3088	0.0332	0.027*
H9B	-0.0155	0.1864	0.0380	0.027*
C10	0.14735 (15)	0.35513 (12)	0.17000 (12)	0.0216 (2)
O2	0.24581 (12)	0.45740 (9)	0.17391 (9)	0.0301 (2)
C11	0.16752 (16)	0.29902 (12)	0.29879 (12)	0.0226 (3)
C12	0.28339 (17)	0.37379 (13)	0.42286 (13)	0.0287 (3)
H12	0.3474	0.4600	0.4267	0.034*
C13	0.30403 (19)	0.32054 (15)	0.54078 (13)	0.0353 (3)
H13	0.3821	0.3694	0.6272	0.042*
C14	0.2090 (2)	0.19514 (15)	0.53014 (14)	0.0393 (4)
H14	0.2202	0.1556	0.6091	0.047*
C15	0.0971 (2)	0.12797 (15)	0.40237 (15)	0.0426 (4)
H15	0.0326	0.0413	0.3962	0.051*
N2	0.07389 (16)	0.17725 (11)	0.28674 (11)	0.0326 (3)
C16	0.19229 (15)	0.25953 (11)	-0.09513 (11)	0.0193 (2)
C17	0.34421 (15)	0.34252 (12)	-0.09007 (11)	0.0220 (2)
H17	0.3524	0.4356	-0.0810	0.026*
C18	0.48440 (16)	0.29177 (13)	-0.09804 (12)	0.0253 (3)

H18	0.5876	0.3501	-0.0938	0.030*
C19	0.47380 (17)	0.15584 (13)	-0.11217 (12)	0.0275 (3)
H19	0.5695	0.1208	-0.1176	0.033*
C20	0.32209 (17)	0.07150 (12)	-0.11837 (12)	0.0269 (3)
H20	0.3137	-0.0217	-0.1284	0.032*
C21	0.18303 (16)	0.12285 (12)	-0.10991 (12)	0.0233 (3)
H21	0.0799	0.0643	-0.1142	0.028*

*Atomic displacement parameters ( $\text{\AA}^2$ )*

	$U^{11}$	$U^{22}$	$U^{33}$	$U^{12}$	$U^{13}$	$U^{23}$
N1	0.0292 (6)	0.0286 (6)	0.0224 (5)	0.0024 (4)	0.0063 (4)	0.0035 (4)
C1	0.0339 (7)	0.0326 (7)	0.0274 (7)	0.0020 (6)	0.0049 (6)	-0.0002 (5)
C2	0.0368 (7)	0.0393 (8)	0.0202 (6)	0.0131 (6)	0.0020 (5)	-0.0015 (5)
C3	0.0480 (8)	0.0416 (8)	0.0197 (6)	0.0156 (7)	0.0106 (6)	0.0096 (6)
C4	0.0360 (7)	0.0341 (7)	0.0230 (6)	0.0061 (6)	0.0111 (6)	0.0090 (5)
C5	0.0233 (6)	0.0262 (6)	0.0197 (6)	0.0071 (5)	0.0078 (5)	0.0058 (5)
C6	0.0211 (6)	0.0265 (6)	0.0207 (6)	0.0057 (5)	0.0076 (5)	0.0076 (5)
O1	0.0285 (5)	0.0361 (5)	0.0265 (5)	-0.0038 (4)	0.0067 (4)	0.0115 (4)
C7	0.0193 (6)	0.0258 (6)	0.0172 (5)	0.0026 (5)	0.0052 (4)	0.0059 (4)
C8	0.0197 (5)	0.0208 (5)	0.0168 (5)	0.0021 (4)	0.0062 (4)	0.0039 (4)
C9	0.0207 (6)	0.0269 (6)	0.0176 (5)	0.0017 (5)	0.0069 (5)	0.0041 (4)
C10	0.0231 (6)	0.0228 (6)	0.0196 (6)	0.0047 (5)	0.0095 (5)	0.0016 (4)
O2	0.0347 (5)	0.0256 (5)	0.0250 (5)	-0.0034 (4)	0.0102 (4)	0.0029 (4)
C11	0.0232 (6)	0.0256 (6)	0.0187 (6)	0.0044 (5)	0.0081 (5)	0.0029 (5)
C12	0.0318 (7)	0.0268 (6)	0.0218 (6)	0.0019 (5)	0.0061 (5)	0.0010 (5)
C13	0.0398 (8)	0.0400 (8)	0.0187 (6)	0.0045 (6)	0.0049 (6)	0.0021 (5)
C14	0.0467 (9)	0.0461 (9)	0.0225 (7)	0.0042 (7)	0.0111 (6)	0.0133 (6)
C15	0.0522 (9)	0.0380 (8)	0.0290 (7)	-0.0087 (7)	0.0121 (7)	0.0111 (6)
N2	0.0369 (6)	0.0310 (6)	0.0230 (5)	-0.0049 (5)	0.0084 (5)	0.0057 (4)
C16	0.0205 (5)	0.0227 (6)	0.0119 (5)	0.0030 (4)	0.0037 (4)	0.0032 (4)
C17	0.0223 (6)	0.0214 (6)	0.0185 (5)	0.0020 (5)	0.0050 (5)	0.0021 (4)
C18	0.0202 (6)	0.0314 (7)	0.0219 (6)	0.0018 (5)	0.0068 (5)	0.0036 (5)
C19	0.0258 (6)	0.0346 (7)	0.0236 (6)	0.0121 (5)	0.0084 (5)	0.0054 (5)
C20	0.0344 (7)	0.0233 (6)	0.0236 (6)	0.0090 (5)	0.0099 (5)	0.0054 (5)
C21	0.0252 (6)	0.0233 (6)	0.0190 (6)	0.0020 (5)	0.0066 (5)	0.0049 (4)

*Geometric parameters ( $\text{\AA}$ ,  $\text{^\circ}$ )*

N1—C1	1.3385 (17)	C10—C11	1.5023 (16)
N1—C5	1.3396 (16)	C11—N2	1.3367 (16)
C1—C2	1.3878 (19)	C11—C12	1.3882 (17)
C1—H1	0.9500	C12—C13	1.3826 (18)
C2—C3	1.371 (2)	C12—H12	0.9500
C2—H2	0.9500	C13—C14	1.376 (2)
C3—C4	1.3879 (19)	C13—H13	0.9500
C3—H3	0.9500	C14—C15	1.381 (2)
C4—C5	1.3936 (17)	C14—H14	0.9500

C4—H4	0.9500	C15—N2	1.3375 (17)
C5—C6	1.5030 (16)	C15—H15	0.9500
C6—O1	1.2154 (14)	C16—C17	1.3881 (16)
C6—C7	1.5129 (16)	C16—C21	1.3975 (16)
C7—C8	1.5327 (15)	C17—C18	1.3884 (17)
C7—H7A	0.9900	C17—H17	0.9500
C7—H7B	0.9900	C18—C19	1.3881 (18)
C8—C16	1.5204 (16)	C18—H18	0.9500
C8—C9	1.5330 (15)	C19—C20	1.3891 (18)
C8—H8	1.0000	C19—H19	0.9500
C9—C10	1.5158 (16)	C20—C21	1.3846 (17)
C9—H9A	0.9900	C20—H20	0.9500
C9—H9B	0.9900	C21—H21	0.9500
C10—O2	1.2144 (14)		
C1—N1—C5	117.02 (11)	O2—C10—C11	119.74 (10)
N1—C1—C2	123.15 (13)	O2—C10—C9	121.64 (10)
N1—C1—H1	118.4	C11—C10—C9	118.61 (10)
C2—C1—H1	118.4	N2—C11—C12	123.42 (11)
C3—C2—C1	119.19 (12)	N2—C11—C10	117.49 (10)
C3—C2—H2	120.4	C12—C11—C10	119.08 (11)
C1—C2—H2	120.4	C13—C12—C11	118.81 (12)
C2—C3—C4	118.98 (12)	C13—C12—H12	120.6
C2—C3—H3	120.5	C11—C12—H12	120.6
C4—C3—H3	120.5	C14—C13—C12	118.51 (12)
C3—C4—C5	117.98 (13)	C14—C13—H13	120.7
C3—C4—H4	121.0	C12—C13—H13	120.7
C5—C4—H4	121.0	C13—C14—C15	118.67 (13)
N1—C5—C4	123.66 (11)	C13—C14—H14	120.7
N1—C5—C6	116.86 (10)	C15—C14—H14	120.7
C4—C5—C6	119.47 (11)	N2—C15—C14	124.11 (13)
O1—C6—C5	120.13 (10)	N2—C15—H15	117.9
O1—C6—C7	121.84 (11)	C14—C15—H15	117.9
C5—C6—C7	117.96 (10)	C11—N2—C15	116.48 (11)
C6—C7—C8	111.75 (9)	C17—C16—C21	118.25 (11)
C6—C7—H7A	109.3	C17—C16—C8	120.93 (10)
C8—C7—H7A	109.3	C21—C16—C8	120.82 (10)
C6—C7—H7B	109.3	C16—C17—C18	121.14 (11)
C8—C7—H7B	109.3	C16—C17—H17	119.4
H7A—C7—H7B	107.9	C18—C17—H17	119.4
C16—C8—C7	110.71 (9)	C19—C18—C17	120.04 (11)
C16—C8—C9	111.00 (9)	C19—C18—H18	120.0
C7—C8—C9	111.88 (9)	C17—C18—H18	120.0
C16—C8—H8	107.7	C18—C19—C20	119.46 (12)
C7—C8—H8	107.7	C18—C19—H19	120.3
C9—C8—H8	107.7	C20—C19—H19	120.3
C10—C9—C8	112.00 (9)	C21—C20—C19	120.18 (11)
C10—C9—H9A	109.2	C21—C20—H20	119.9

C8—C9—H9A	109.2	C19—C20—H20	119.9
C10—C9—H9B	109.2	C20—C21—C16	120.93 (11)
C8—C9—H9B	109.2	C20—C21—H21	119.5
H9A—C9—H9B	107.9	C16—C21—H21	119.5

*Hydrogen-bond geometry (Å, °)*

D—H···A	D—H	H···A	D···A	D—H···A
C18—H18···O2 <sup>i</sup>	0.95	2.62	3.4913 (15)	153
C4—H4···O1 <sup>ii</sup>	0.95	2.42	3.2556 (16)	146
C1—H1···N1 <sup>iii</sup>	0.95	2.64	3.4588 (18)	145

Symmetry codes: (i)  $-x+1, -y+1, -z$ ; (ii)  $-x, -y+1, -z-1$ ; (iii)  $-x-1, -y, -z-1$ .