Reviewer's report

Title: Norcantharidin inhibits tumor growth and vasculogenic mimicry of human gallbladder carcinomas by suppression of the PI3-K/MMPs/Ln-5gamma2 signaling pathway

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Reviewer: Vaijayanti Kale

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory Revisions:
Western blot data depicted in figure 10 are not convincing. Normalization of data with housekeeping genes like beta actin should have been done. The blot shows only a marginal decrease in signal for PI3K and MMP-2 where as the graph shows a substantial reduction. The Ln5g2 data are not convincing at all. Better data need to be generated for this molecule.
The inhibition of tumor growth by NCTD is ~ 40%. It would be necessary to observe the tumors for a longer time after the treatment is stopped to see if the effect is reversible. Although the VM is inhibited, the tumor has not subsided completely. It may be a source of further complications like metastasis etc. This needs to be addressed before publishing this paper. It is possible that NCTD may be more effective if used in combination of other anti-cancer drugs.

Minor essential revisions:
In figure 5, an image showing comparative sizes of dissected tumors should be incorporated.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.