

Woman sex case QC was 'a willing partner' in drunk romp: Solicitor will not face charge of sexually assaulting barrister after two witnesses said she consented (but she still can't be named)

- Graeme Stening, 52, was accused of sexually assaulting a barrister
- Both were caught in a clinch outside Waterloo station in London
- Both were held overnight in cells and the woman QC accepted a caution
- Mr Stening refused to do so and faced trial meaning she would be named
- Six weeks later she tried to retract her acceptance of the caution
- She said following a boozy lunch with Mr Stening she did not consent
- This gave her lifetime anonymity as a potential sex assault victim

By [NEIL SEARS](#) and [CHRIS GREENWOOD FOR THE DAILY MAIL](#)

PUBLISHED: 23:40, 15 June 2016 | **UPDATED:** 08:24, 16 June 2016

A solicitor will not be charged with sexually assaulting a female barrister after police found two witnesses who said she was a willing partner in the drunken romp.

Graeme Stening, 52, was accused of sexual assault six weeks after the pair were caught in a clinch outside Waterloo station in London.

After both were held overnight in the cells, the woman QC, who was found with her knickers round her ankles, accepted a police caution for outraging public decency.



Mr Stening refused to do so and faced trial – meaning the female barrister would have been named publicly in court.

'Boozy lunch': Graeme Stening, 52, was accused of sexually assaulting a QC

But six weeks after the evening rush-hour liaison on August 20, she tried to retract her acceptance of the caution, claiming that following a boozy lunch with Mr Stening she would not have been able to consent to sexual activity and must have been assaulted by him.

This gave her lifetime anonymity as a potential sex assault victim.

Mr Stening, a father of three whose wife Sian is standing by him, insists their encounter was consensual. But as a result of the allegations, he spent months in fear of prosecution until police confirmed yesterday that he would not be charged.

His solicitor said yesterday that the woman should be investigated for perverting the course of justice.

A source told the Mail Mr Stening and the QC met for a boozy lunch at her instigation – and ended up so drunk they were found by police at 7pm leaning on a wall outside Waterloo.

The source said: 'She had her knickers round her ankles, while he was exposed and touching himself with one hand, and her with the other.'

After her night in the cells to sober up, he refused to accept a caution for outraging public decency, but the QC signed it.

Along with being a leading lawyer herself, she had legal advice before signing the caution – in which a suspect admits a criminal offence and accepts a police warning without going to court.

She later said alcohol and medication had left her incapable of consenting to sexual activity. But officers found two independent witnesses who confirmed Mr Stening's claim that she played a willing part in the sexual activity.

Police decided there was not enough evidence to give to the Crown Prosecution Service after rejecting an appeal by the barrister last month for them to reconsider her allegation.

The source said: 'The witnesses said they saw this incident going on – but this woman seemed to be consenting to everything. The two police who caught them assumed the same.'

“ Knickers around her ankles ”

Mr Stening, who lives in a £2million house in Windlesham, Surrey, has now accepted a caution for outraging public decency, meaning he will not appear in court and risk jail.

But his solicitor, Amarjit Bhachu, said the barrister should be investigated over whether she made the sex assault claim to keep her name a secret.

He told the Mail: 'It was apparent from the outset that the complainant's motive was to obtain anonymity. Despite the police taking the decision not to take any further action, the complainant has achieved what she wanted by taking this calculated course of action.'



Family man: The £2million house in Windlesham, Surrey, he shares with his wife, who stands by him

'I hope the police will review the complainant's actions and the independent evidence with a view to bringing charges against her for attempting to pervert the course of justice or at the very least wasting police time.'

He added that his client had initially refused to accept a caution because he disputed the details of the what the police wanted him to admit. Those issues have now been resolved.

The female barrister said through her solicitors Bindmans: 'I reported an incident to police in good faith having carefully considered the implications and only because I believed it was the right thing to do.'

“ An active participant ”

'I would never make a deliberately false allegation of a serious criminal offence and any suggestion that I did so is deeply offensive and upsetting.'

She is still fighting to quash her caution, while facing a Bar Standards Council investigation into her behaviour.

Critics have expressed concern that the anonymity law could have been used to keep the woman's name secret – and pointed out that a prosecution of Mr Stening for sexual assault would have been fatally flawed by the caution she signed admitting consensual sexual activity.

A source familiar with the case told the Mail: 'I can't believe the police will accept her attempt to withdraw her acceptance of the caution. If her attempt were to be successful, she would surely have to be charged with outraging public decency – and appear in court after all. Witnesses claim she was an active participant in this 'romp'.'

Mr Stening is understood to have reported himself to the Solicitors Regulation Authority and could be disciplined for lowering the profession's standing.

n.sears@dailymail.co.uk



Comments 187

Share what you think

Newest

Oldest

Best rated

Worst rated

[View all](#)

The comments below have been moderated in advance.



[Arjay](#), Dorset, 10 months ago

Interestingly, I haven't yet been able to discover her name from any of the 'usual' internet locations.....shouldn't be long now though...

Click to rate

123

2



[meme](#), Aeburdein, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

She cant be named, but he can, how fair. Personally i think all false allegations should meet with nearly the same sentence as what they are accusing the person of having done, oh and off course named, shamed and hounded by the press.

Click to rate

168

3



[nicole1523](#), Essex, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

Knickers round where? Sorry DM, didn't quite catch that - I think you need to state it a few more times.

Click to rate

73

4



[zandaar](#), Ayr, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

As she is no longer a "victim" name and shame her.

Click to rate	169	3
---------------	-----	---



[Mejulie](#), Brighton, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

How do we know the two witnesses aren't lying?

Click to rate	14	132
---------------	----	-----



[mecmac](#), dunedin, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

What a farce.

Click to rate	85	1
---------------	----	---



[thebigshort](#), New York, United States, 10 months ago

This is not a level playing field - they both behaved equally disgracefully but he has taken all the flack - if the woman was also named it might be a deterrent to others

Click to rate	160	4
---------------	-----	---



[anya](#), Paisley, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

He could've avoided all of this by remembering he is a married father of 3

Click to rate	118	41
---------------	-----	----



[Idontbelieveit....](#), Liverpool, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

Could be disciplined for lowering the profession's standing? How the hell would that be possible?

Click to rate	93	2
---------------	----	---



[Mechanic893](#), Cardiff, United Kingdom, 10 months ago

If she is no longer a victim of a sexual assault how can her name be protected? That makes it a mockery for REAL victims who tell the truth.

Click to rate	159	0
---------------	-----	---

[View all](#)

The views expressed in the contents above are those of our users and do not necessarily reflect the views of MailOnline.

We are no longer accepting comments on this article.