Discuss the relevant ethical and legal issues raised by the fictitious scenario below. You should divide your work into three paragraphs, numbered, corresponding with the paragraphs of the scenario (i.e. 1 to 3).

You should make use of the supplied unit readings and case examples to support your answer. Make sure you check the Marking Rubric attached to the assignment to see where marks are allocated. Remember to proof-read your work before submission as marks are deducted for prose and expression errors. Note: You do not need to assume anything on the facts supplied below. Avoid phrases such as ‘assuming that …’, or ‘If we assume that…’ in your analysis. All professional communicators are members of relevant ethics code covered organisations.

TASK / QUESTIONS:

1. Bubbles Barrett is a successful Melbourne actor known for her comic roles in Hollywood films such as ‘Hilarious’, ‘Hilarious Too’ and ‘The Florist’. She is a multimillionaire whose home in Elwood is a well-known landmark, and she is a favourite topic of weekly magazine stories. So, when ‘Woman’s Digest’ reporter Tansy Career asks for an interview with Bubbles at her home, she is glad to oblige the condition that no photographs are taken. Tansy agrees but arranges for a freelance photographer to accompany her anyway, and they go to Bubbles’ house.

2. When Bubbles answers the door, she invites Tansy in, but tells the photographer he has to leave the property. He walks out of the gate, but when Bubbles closes the door he sneaks back onto the porch and waits. When Tansy is shown out by Bubbles 20 minutes later, the photographer snaps a photo of Bubbles and runs back out of the gate. Tansy goes back to the office, where she fills out her material with a call to an old school friend of Bubbles, who is called ‘an unnamed source’ in the Digest’s upcoming story. Two days later, she calls Bubbles' Public Relations officer, who tells her that Bubbles is not available for comment until next week as she is on a film location, working.

3 When Woman’s Digest publishes its two-page spread on Bubbles with the photo taken at the house and numerous quotes from the interview, Bubbles is furious. She’s even madder, however, that the ‘unnamed source’ is quoted in the story as saying ‘Bubbles’ is not her real name – her name is ‘Raylene’ – and she lied about being related to Hollywood great, Steven Spielberg. Bubbles calls her lawyer, who sends a letter of concern to Woman’s Digest, demanding a retraction and apology. The magazine refuses to retract or apologise, saying Bubbles agreed to be interviewed and knows how the media works.

The day after the magazine issue was published, Channel X, a commercial TV station, leads its Today Tonight current affairs program with an exclusive story about Bubbles’ new life coaching business. It features the photo from Woman’s Digest plus footage from an ABC TV lifestyle program about her famous Elwood home.

Guiding Points:

• Contempt of Court is not assessed by this assignment.

• Evaluation of ethics includes positive, not merely negative, analyses of media

practice

• Please be sure to approach your analysis from a professional

communication perspective, as this is not a legal problem-solving task

• Quoted material included in your text is counted in the overall word count