

BALLARAT NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

SEBASTOPOL COMMUNITY GARDEN MASTER PLAN



Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre operates—the Wadawurrung People. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging, and honour their enduring connection to land, waters, and community.

Overview

Since 1980, Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) has been a vital hub for community development across Ballarat East, Delacombe, and Sebastopol. Today, BNC continues to foster connection, learning, and wellbeing through inclusive and sustainable spaces.

This Master Plan presents a vision for the future of BNC's community hubs and gardens, with a focus on the Sebastopol Community Garden. It aims to ensure these spaces remain vibrant, accessible, and responsive to evolving community needs.



Design Principles

In addition to the community's vision for the space, design principles provide a reference point and a commitment to achieving a design that is socially, environmentally and economically responsible. The development of BNC's community garden is guided by the following principles:

- Inclusive & Accessible:
Welcoming spaces for people of all abilities and backgrounds.
- Community-Led:
Reflecting local voices, needs, and aspirations.
- Sustainable:
Prioritising composting, seasonal planting, and materials reuse.
- Safe & Flexible:
Secure, adaptable environments with passive supervision.
- Educational & Engaging:
Supporting learning, play, and social interaction.
- Cost-Effective:
Utilising recycled materials and volunteer contributions.

Constraints & Considerations

Through site analysis and community engagement, key constraints and opportunities have been identified to inform the design framework:

Constraints

- Limited funding necessitates a staged approach.
- Underground services require mapping prior to construction.
- Balancing accessibility with site security.
- Infrastructure planning for irrigation, plumbing, and lighting.

Opportunities

- Strengthen partnerships with Phoenix P-12 Community College.
- Activate underutilised spaces.
- Encourage volunteering and community ownership.
- Employ frugal construction methods (e.g., pallet reuse).
- Support local employment and training through garden initiatives.

These insights form the foundation for the Structure Plan, Concept Plan, and Implementation Plan.



Structure Plan

The Structure Plan outlines the spatial organisation and functional zones of the Sebastopol Community Garden, based on community input and site analysis. Key elements include:

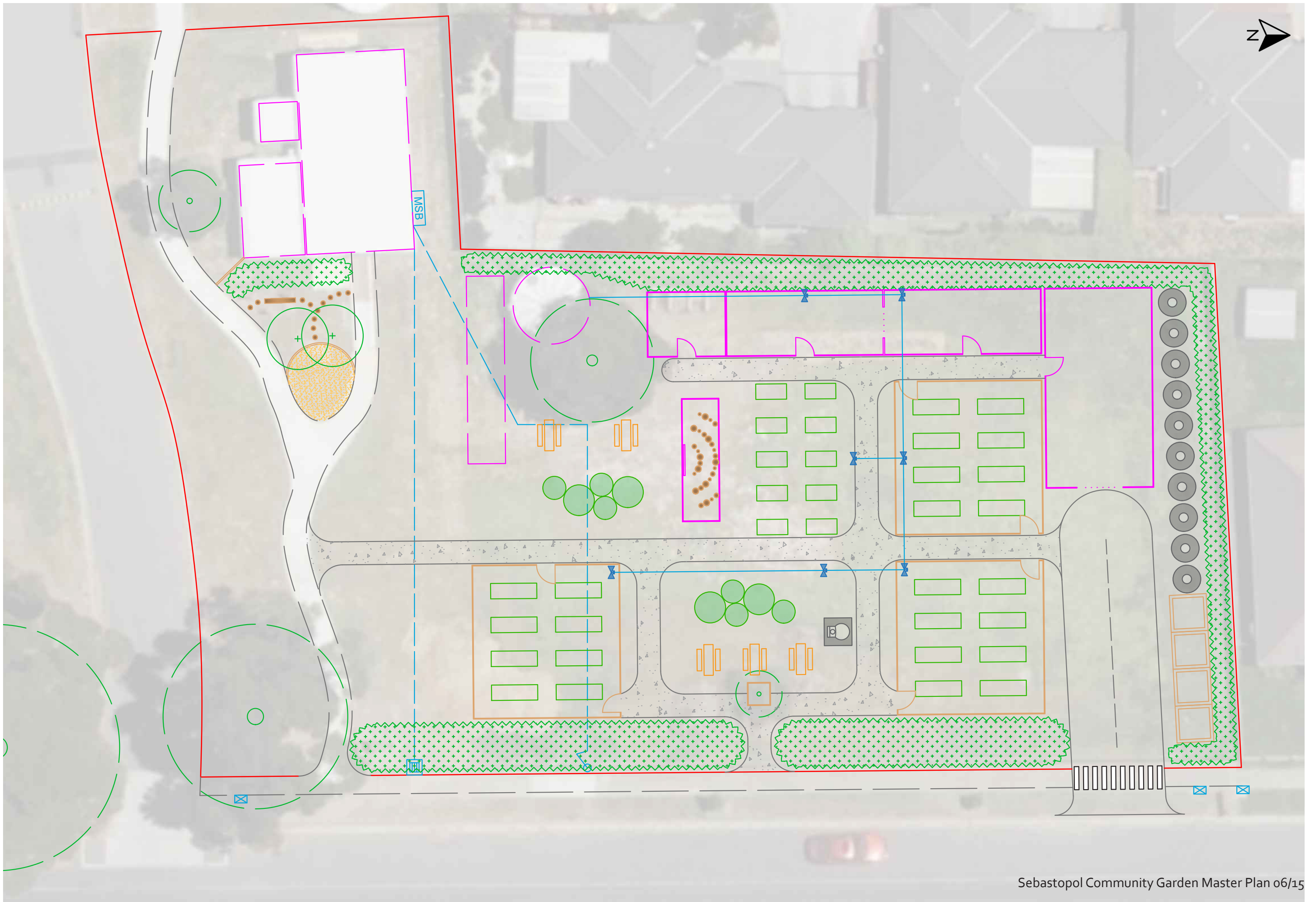
- Defined precinct boundaries
- Access points and pathways
- Storage and waste systems
- Flexible zones for future expansion



Concept Plan

The Concept Plan illustrates the overall vision and design intent for the garden, highlighting key features:

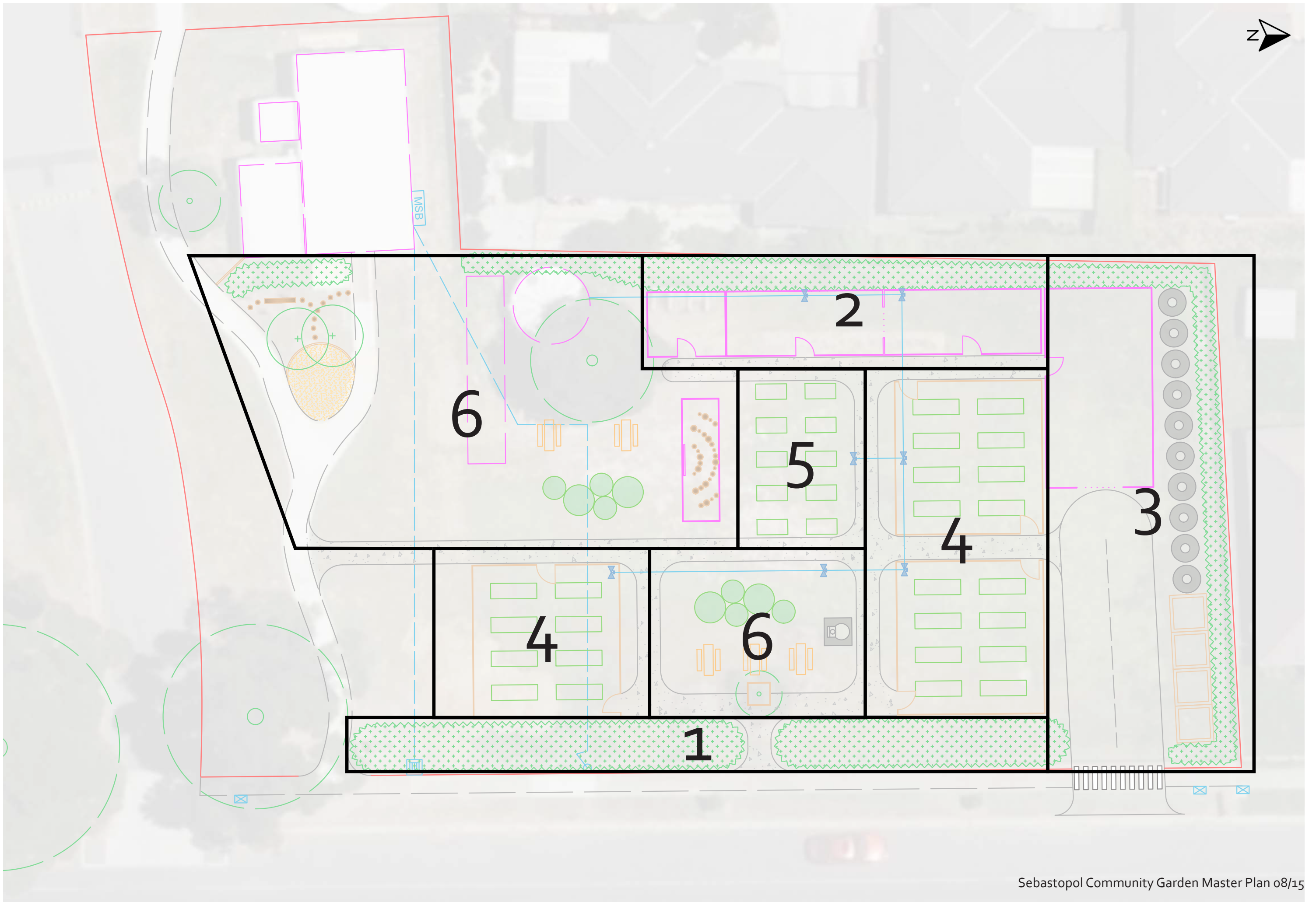
- Fruity Forest and Nursery zones
- Composting and farming beds
- Accessible paths and seating
- Outdoor classroom and nature play areas
- Community gathering and event space



Implementation Plan

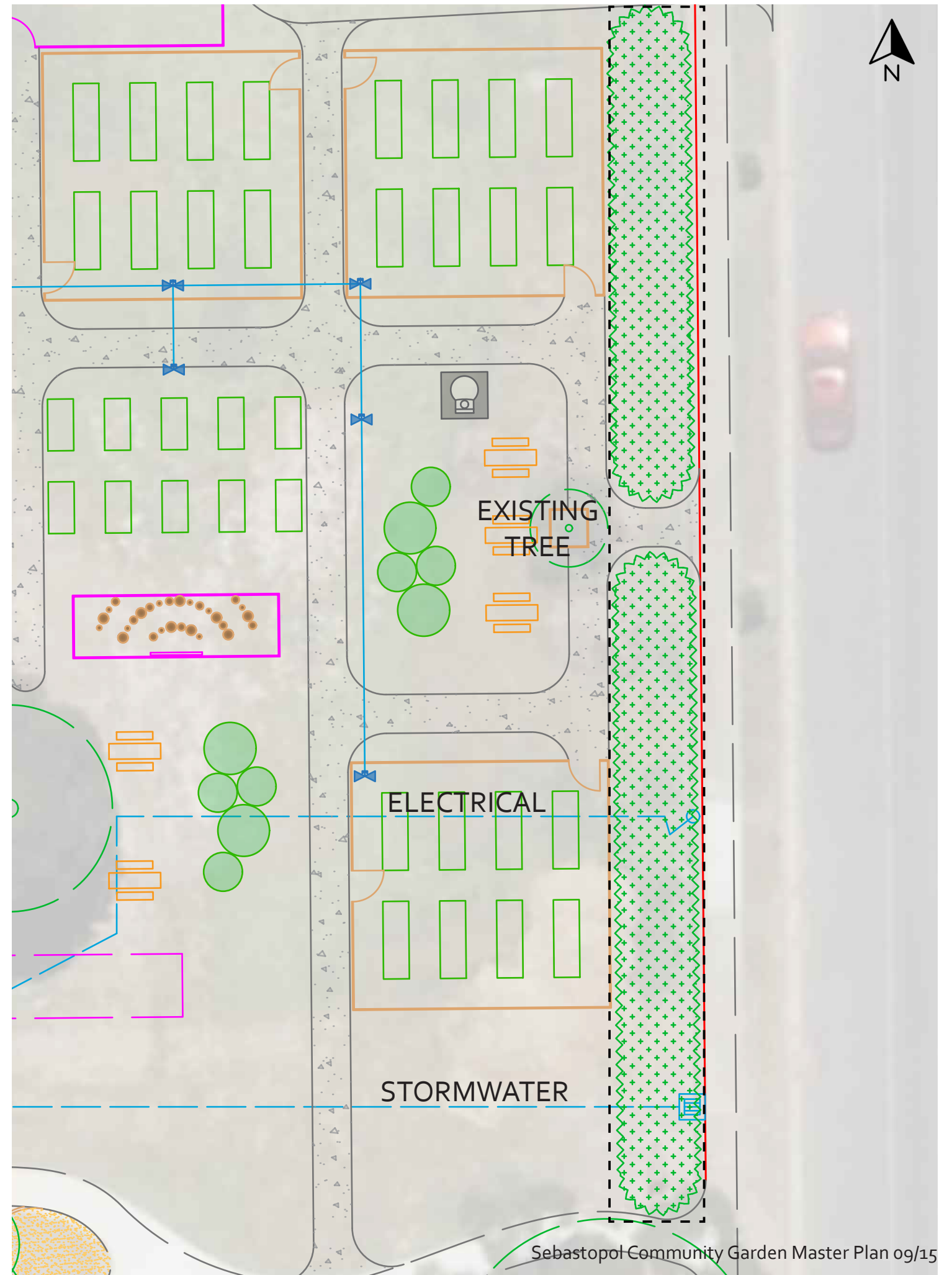
This phased plan supports BNC and the community in delivering the Concept Plan. Staging may be adjusted based on funding and emerging opportunities.

1. Fruity Forest
2. Nursery
3. Waste Recovery
4. Farming Gardens
5. NDIS Garden
6. Community Engagement



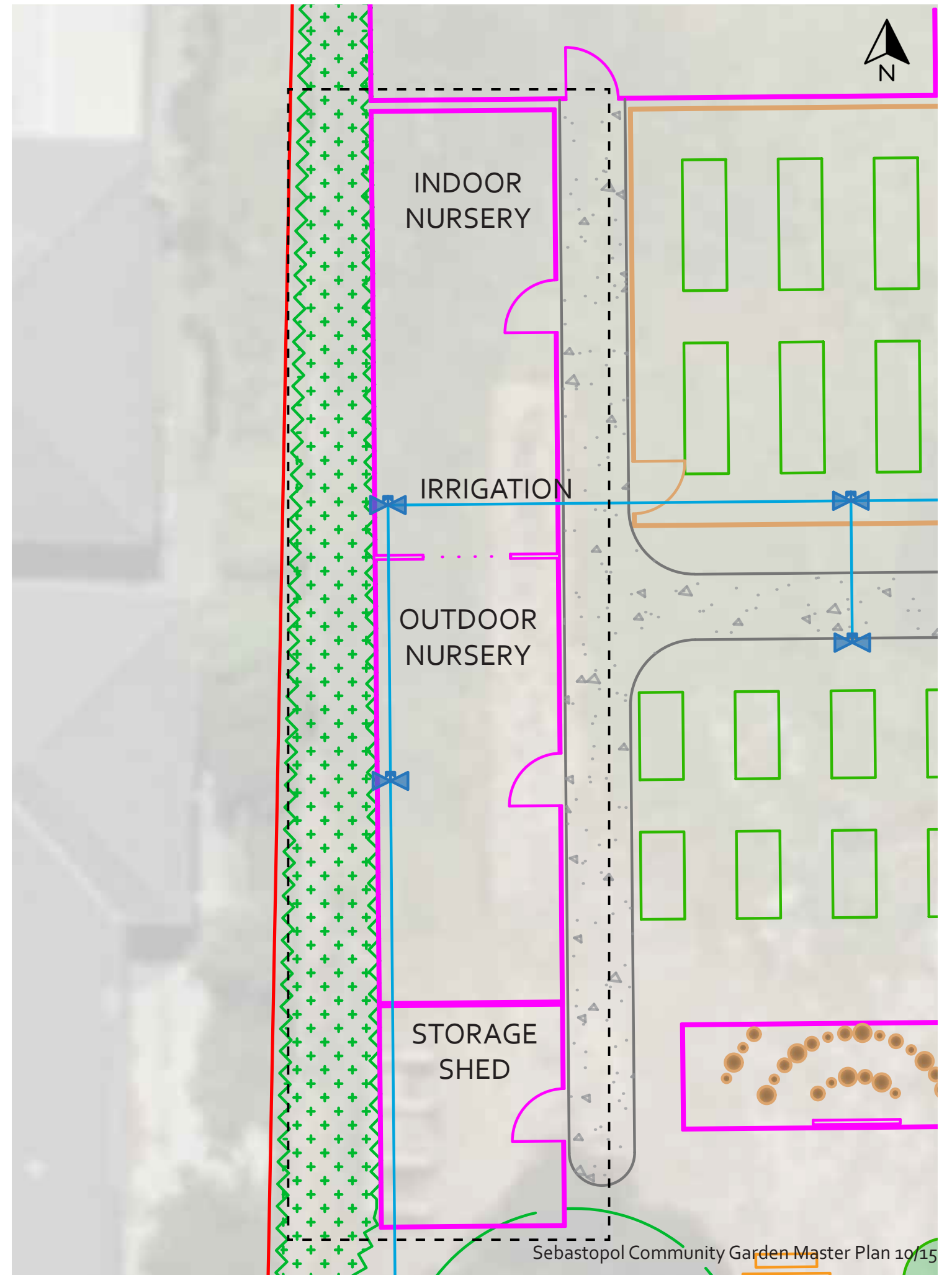
Precinct 1 – Fruity Forest

- Currently funded and in progress
- Features espalier apple trees



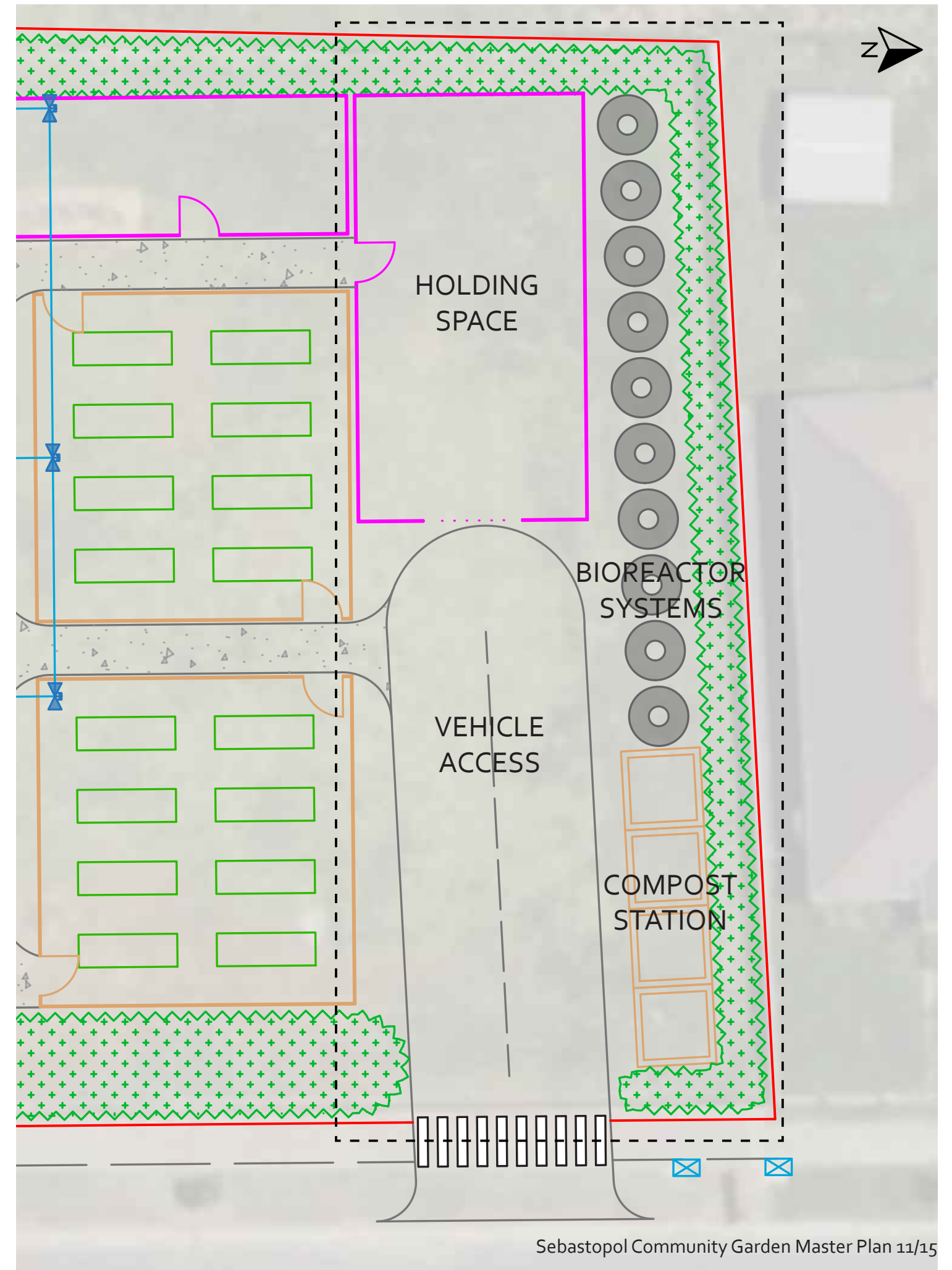
Precinct 2 – Nursery

- Indoor and outdoor nursery spaces
- Storage sheds
- High fencing for security
- Irrigation taps



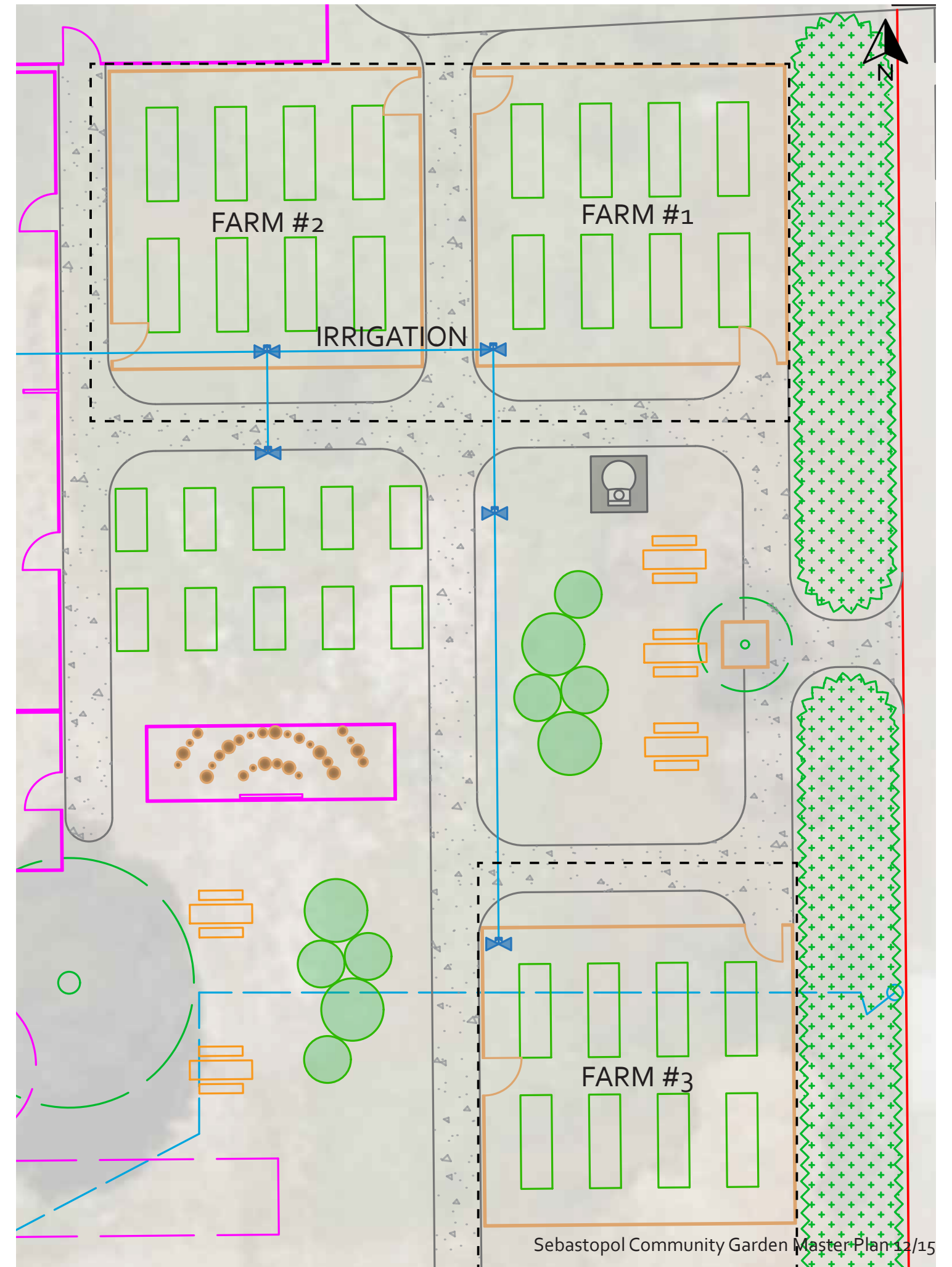
Precinct 3 – Waste Recovery

- Compost collection station
- Holding space and driveway access
- Johnson-Su bioreactor systems



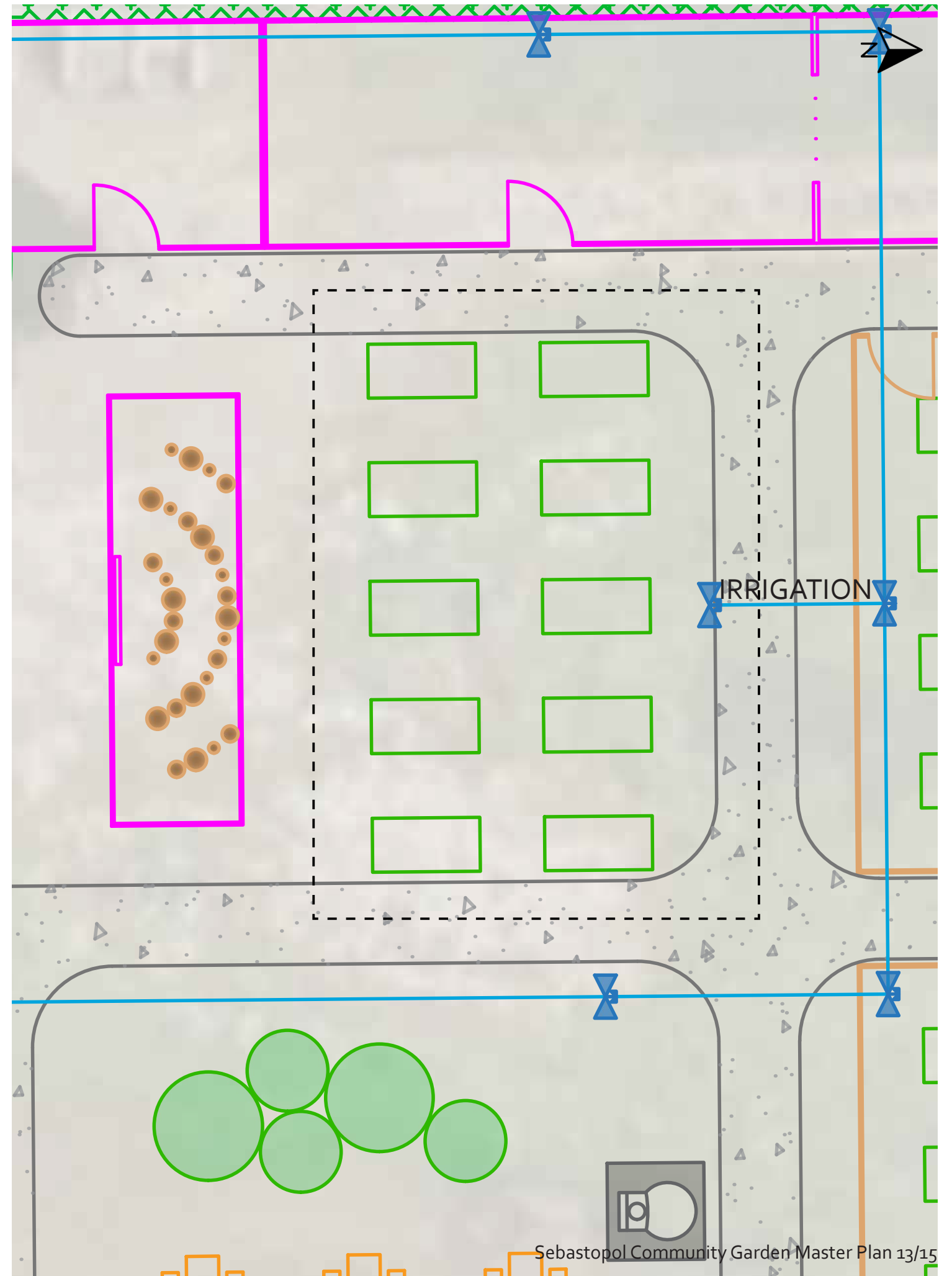
Precinct 4 – Farming Gardens

- Gated and secure area
- Three distinct garden zones
- Each zone includes 8 beds (1x3m)
- Minimum 1.2m pathways for accessibility
- Use of recycled and community-sourced materials
- Irrigation taps



Precinct 5 – NDIS Garden

- Ten reused garden beds (2x1m)
- Fully accessible layout
- Located near driveway for easy drop-off
- Irrigation tap



Precinct 6 – Community Engagement

- Nature play area with sandpit
- Demonstration gardens with corten steel rings
- Pizza oven and picnic tables
- Outdoor classroom with lockable whiteboard



Growing Together

At the heart of the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre Community Garden is a simple but powerful idea: that when we grow together, we thrive together.

This garden is more than soil and seeds—it's a place where stories are shared, skills are learned, and connections are nurtured. It reflects the strength, creativity, and care of the Sebastopol community.

As we move forward, we invite everyone to be part of this journey. Whether you plant a tree, lend a hand, or simply share a smile, your contribution helps this space flourish.

“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”

— Coretta Scott King

