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PVN OP 262 Excavation Report

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Site 262

Site 262 is located ca. 2.1km southeast of the Rio Chamelecon and 400m southwest of the Quebrada Grande. Site 466 is approximately 350m to the southwest whereas as Site 168 lies 600m northeast, and across the Quebrada Grande, from Site 262. The settlement is situated atop a colluvial fan issuing from the nearby Cerro Grande (Kirk Anderson, personal communication, 1992). The terrain slopes up gradually from northwest to southeast, encountering the steep escarpments of Cerro Grande roughly 150m to the southeast. The land occupied by Site 262 was devoted to animal pasture when it was first surveyed in 1988 and excavated in 1992. Structures 262-6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 17 showed signs of significant damage, most likely due to plowing in recent years. The disruption of Strs. 262-12 and 17 was severe enough that their basic outlines could not be mapped with any confidence. Structures 262-1 through 5 seemed from surface indications, however, to be well-preserved.

Site 262 consists of 17 structures scattered over an area of roughly 23,000m². Structures 262-1 through 5 are clustered in the north-central part of the settlement where they define a patio. Lying 110m to the southeast, Str. 262-6, 7, and 9-11 delimit another patio, this one unobstructed by any surface-visible constructions on its east side. Structures 8 and 17 are paired together 48m to the north of the Str. 262-1 through 5 group. Structures 262-15, 16 and 262-13, 14 appear on the surface as low rises lying 38m northeast and 36m east of the Str. 262-1 through 5 aggregate. It was unclear from surface indications alone if Strs. 262-13 through 16 were purposeful constructions or natural features.

Structures 262-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 15, along with one test pit, were excavated during the 1992 field season under the direction of Neil Ross and Lavinia True. These investigations resulted in the clearing of ca. 242m², most of the work concentrated in the central patio group (that cluster made up of Strs. 262-1 through 5).

Structure 262-1

Structure 262-1 is the largest construction at the settlement and is located near the center of the Str. 262-1 through 5 building cluster. Structure 262-4 is 4m to the west while Str. 262-3 is 8m to the south. Excavations here were limited to a 1x16m trench (Subop. 262B and G; 16m² cleared in all) that ran north-south across the approximate center of the edifice. Digging reached a maximum depth of 1m outside construction, very little of Str. 262-1's architectural fill being probed in the course of digging this trench. One major construction stage was identified in the course of this work which was directed by L. True.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1, 2	-	

2	-	-	S.3	-	LCLII/III?
3	Str. 262-1-1 st	U.1-11	-	-	LCLIII/EPC
4	-	-	S.4, 5	F.1	

Time Span 1

The first event recorded in Str. 262-1's vicinity was the deposition of at least 0.2m of a dark reddish brown, very hard-compacted clayey loam (S.1; this layer's base lay beyond our excavation limits). Covering S.1 by 0.15m is a very hard-compacted, reddish brown silty loam in which were found fragments of a decaying yellowish rock (S.2). Both S.1 and 2 were uncovered in a 1x1m probe dug into the northernmost portion of Subop. 262B and G. Neither stratum yielded any cultural materials, suggesting that there was no significant human presence in the area when S.1 and 2 were being laid down.

Time Span 2

A hard-compacted, dark brown loam (S.3) accumulated to a maximum observed thickness of 0.2m over S.2 during TS.2. Exposures of S.3 are separated by 13.93m over which distance this layer had risen 0.73m from north-to-south. The recovery of artifacts from S.3 points to the pursuit of activities by people residing in the immediate area while this stratum was being deposited.

Time Span 3

Structure 262-1-1st is a sizable platform that was ascended on the north by two stone-faced risers (U.1 and 2) both of which were in advanced stages of deterioration by the time they were investigated. Unit 1, the basal northern facing, stood a reconstructed 0.84m high and was succeeded 0.67m to the south by U.2. This ascent appears to run down behind (south) of U.1 and rises an inferred 0.31m above it. Unit 2 is 1.04m wide, broad enough to have served as the platform's northern core wall against which U.1 was placed. Lying immediately south of U.2 is what may have been an earthen-floored room covering 1.03m north-south. Unit 2 is estimated to have stood 0.28m above the putative floor of this enclosure, thus marking its northern limit. The southern boundary is demarcated by U.3, a 0.47m-high stone facing against which U.4, a 0.27m-high by 0.55m-wide stone wall, abuts. Unit 4 projects 0.81m north of U.3 and may have been a stone-faced and –surfaced shelf set within a very small enclosure. It might also have served as a foundation dividing the space north of U.3 into two enclosures set in an east-west line.

Structure 262-1-1st's summit is immediately south of, and 0.38m above, the inferred floor of the room bounded by U.2 and 3. A floor (U.5) composed of large cobbles set in an earth matrix runs 1.83m back (south) from U.3's south face and ends in a 0.13m-high by 0.85m-wide stone-faced, earth-filled bench or shelf (U.6). Unit 6 is backed on the south by U.8, which rises a preserved 0.21m above it. Lying 0.1m north of U.6 is the east face of a stone wall (U.7) that is 0.4m high by 1.25m long north-south by at least 0.4m wide east-west (the construction's west face lies beyond our excavation

limits). Unit 7 was poorly preserved and it is unclear if it originally joined with U.6, thus creating with the latter a 'L'-shaped bench, or if it served some other function, such as a room divider or shelf.

The south flank of Str. 262-1-1st is mounted by three stone-faced ascents (U.9-11). The basal southern riser (U.11) is 0.28m tall by 0.45m wide and is succeeded by U.10. The latter stands 0.11m above the U.11 tread and extends 1.24m to the north. Both U.10 and 11 were paved with stones. Unit 9, in turn, stands an estimated 0.38m above U.10's tread and runs 0.85m north to U.8. The latter extends down behind U.9 for at least 0.16m and stands 0.56m above that terrace. At 0.88m wide, U.8 may well be Str. 262-1-1st's southern core retaining wall, analogous in function to the equally substantial U.2 on the north.

As understood from the narrow swath we cut across Str. 262-1-1st, the building in its final known form was a stone-faced platform that stood 1.21m tall on the north and 0.96m high on the south, measured 9.75m north-south, and was aligned roughly 268 degrees. The platform was ascended on the north by two stone-faced risers that were 0.87m and 0.31m high by 0.67m and 1.04m wide. These facings led to what was apparently an earthen-floored room measuring 1.03m across. Much of the exposed portion of this cubicle was taken up by a stone construction that stood 0.27m high, was 0.55m wide, and projected 0.81m north from the compartment's southern boundary. This entity may have served as a shelf or room divider. Three facings rise to the summit on the south in increments of 0.28m, 0.11m, and 0.38m, their treads covering 0.45m, 1.24m, and 0.85m north-south. The two lower ascents in this sequence were paved with stones.

Structure 262-1-1st's superstructure is 2.74m wide north-south and was apparently open to the north. A stone floor fronts a 0.13m-high by 0.85m-wide stone-faced, earth-filled bench or shelf which looks northward over the aforementioned earthen-floored cubicle and risers. The bench/shelf, in turn, is backed on the south by a wall marking the summit's southern margin. This construction rises a preserved 0.21m above the inferred top of the bench/shelf. The latter construction may have had a stone projection extending 1.35m north from it into the summit room though it is unclear if this 0.4m-tall by 0.4m-wide element was originally free-standing.

All but one of the constructions associated with Str. 262-1-1st were made of cobbles set in a mud mortar. The one exception was the southern basal facing which was fashioned of cut blocks made from a soft, white stone, probably tuff. Chinking stones were used to level out courses in the observed walls and there was some effort made to orient the flatter aspects of all facing rocks outwards.

Time Span 4

Following Str. 262-1-1st's abandonment, as much as 0.72m of a very dark grayish brown, hard-compacted loam (S4) was deposited. Covering this layer in turn was the humus horizon formed on this soil (S.5) which reached a maximum depth of 0.45m immediately south of the platform. Embedded in both strata is a dense concentration of rocks that likely fell from final-phase architecture (F.1). Feature 1 is especially

concentrated within 2.1m north of Str. 262-1-1st. In fact, so many rocks are packed so close together in this space, many of them looking to have been flat-laid, that this portion of F.1 may be the remnants of a very late, very casual addition made to cover the structure's northern basal facing. There are far fewer such stones, at far lower densities, south of Str. 262-1-1st.

Structure 262-2

Structure 262-2 is a sizable platform situated on the eastern margin of the plaza delimited by Strs. 262-1 and 3 on the north and south, respectively. Structure 262-1 is 10m to the northwest whereas Str. 262-3 is 11.5m to the southwest. Structure 262-2 was completely cleared in the course of excavations conducted in Subop. 262-C and J, resulting in the clearing of ca. 85m². Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.84m and 1.03m below modern ground surface outside and within construction, respectively. One building episode, possibly never completed, was revealed in the course of this work which was supervised by L. True.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1, 2	-	LCLII/III?
2	Str. 262-2-1 st	U.1-8	-	-	LCLIII/EPC
3	-	-	S.2, 3	F.1	

Time Span 1

The first activity attested to in the vicinity of Str. 262-2 was the deposition of at least 0.19m of a yellow-tan to yellow, hard-compacted clay in which a few rocks are included (S.1; its base lies beyond our excavation limits). Stratum 1 ascends 0.69m across 9.94m west-to-east. An estimated 0.16m of a medium-brown, clayey silt with a few white and red inclusions (S.2) was deposited over S.1 on Str. 262-2-1st's west side where it underlies that platform's western basal facing (U.6). Stratum 2 was not recorded in a comparable stratigraphic position elsewhere in Str. 262-2-1st's environs where it was generally found overlying elements of this building (and was deposited in TS.3). The recovery of artifacts from lower S.2 at least points to a human presence in the vicinity while this soil was being laid down.

Time Span 2

Structure 262-2-1st is a large, by local standards, platform that was either never finished or was extensively robbed of its stones in antiquity. The building's core is defined by substantial stone walls (U.4-7) that stand 0.5-0.95m tall and are 1.1-1.23m wide. The best preserved of these entities, U.5 on the east, was also the tallest and widest of the facings. The northern and southern retaining walls (U.7 and 4) decline in

height towards the west whereas the western facing (U.6) is generally much lower than the remaining units. The widths of U.7 and 6 also narrow to as little as 0.3m at their junction at what should have been the core's northwest corner. Here the interior faces of U.6 and 7 are clear but their exterior aspects are completely missing. There was no sign of recent looting or stone robbing nor is there much in the way of debris that likely fell from these constructions. The available evidence, therefore, suggests that the west face, and particularly the northwest corner of Str. 262-2-1st's core platform, was either carefully and systematically robbed of most of its original stones or this side of the edifice was never completed.

Units 1-3 partially envelope the core on the north, east, and south. Unit 1, the longest of these entities, runs for 11.9m north-south, is 0.64m wide, and stands 0.75m high. Unit 1 appears to be the best-preserved of the three units that partially surround the core platform. Unit 3, which fronts the southern face of the core platform, is 0.6m high, by 0.6m wide, and extends from its corner with U.1 for 8.4m to the west where it ends without a clear resolution. The corner made by the intersection of U.1 and 3 is inset, measuring 0.25m east-west by 0.7m north-south. As with the southern facing of the core wall (U.4), U.3 also declines notably in height from east to west; the westernmost 3.05m of the construction is only ca. 0.2m high. The outward (southern) face of U.3 was also missing much of its upper course of stones when investigated. Unit 2 on the north is 0.6m high by 0.65m wide and runs for 1.6m west from its right-angle corner with U.1 at which point it simply ends. The architectural significance of U.1-3 is unclear. On the best-preserved, east, side it appears that U.1 was made to serve as a terrace backed to the west by a fill composed of medium yellow-tan clay with some white inclusions (U.8). If this were the case, the U.1 terrace measured 0.56m tall by 1.34m wide. Unit 5 would then have projected an estimated 0.16m above the terrace's earthen-floored surface and given way to an earthen-floored summit measuring 3.26x5.15m. The platform's hearting was made up of a yellow-tan clay identical with that noted between U.1 and 5 covered by as much as 0.22m of a dark brown, fine-grained, loosely compacted silty soil (all included in U.8). The tops of both components of U.8 within the core platform slope down from east to west, dropping 0.34m and 0.5m (for lower and upper U.8, respectively) over 3.4m in this direction.

Such an interpretation seems less credible on the south and north where neither of the putative terrace facings (U.3 and 2) link up with either the core platform or another, western facing to retain the fill supposedly packed in against the platform's central block defined by U.4-7. At the same time, the narrow spaces separating U.1-3 and the core platform (0.7-1.3m) do not seem to suggest that U.1-3 were raised as foundations that define the perimeters of surface-level rooms built against U.4, 5, and 7. We are inclined, therefore, to interpret U.1-3 as parts of a terrace construction that either originally encircled Str. 262-2-1st's core platform or was never completed. If the former option is correct, then all of the western terrace and most of its northern counterpart have been robbed of their stones along with the upper courses that supposedly once graced the westernmost 3.05m of U.3 on the south.

We infer that Str. 262-2-1st was once, or was planned to be, a stone-faced, earth-filled platform that stood an estimated 0.75m tall, measured 9.5x12.5m, and was aligned

approximately 6 degrees. Bounded by a stone-faced, earthen-floored terrace on each side, the earthen-floored summit consisted of one room measuring 16.8m². No built-in furniture was recorded in this area though the relatively great widths of all four core walls leaves open the possibility that they acted to retain fill, support the superstructure's perishable upper walls, and as benches or shelves.

All facings associated with Str. 262-2-1st were made primarily of river cobbles among which a few angular, white stones were included. Chinking pebbles frequently underlay the basal courses of these units and were packed around some of the higher rocks. All stones were set in a mud mortar and there was a concerted effort to direct their flatter aspects outwards.

A major question that remains concerns whether Str. 262-2-1st was ever completed. We tend to think it was not because what seem to be absent or incomplete aspects of constructions associated with both the core platform and terraces are consistently on the building's west side. If Str. 262-2-1st had been completed and then robbed of stones, it seems that the depredations would have been more widespread. Further, the very small amount and light density of tumbled architectural debris west of the building implies either that stone robbing here was remarkably thorough or the walls were never completed, leaving very little behind to fall. Consequently, we infer that Str. 262-2-1st was in the process of construction when work here ceased abruptly.

Time Span 3

Following Str. 262-2-1st's abandonment, as much as 0.44m of S.2 accumulated over S.1 and against the platform's east side. On the west, S.2's deposition resumed, resulting the accumulation of an additional 0.18m atop that portion of S.2 that was laid down during TS.1. Covering and S.2 and Str. 262-2-1st's summit by 0.16-0.29m is the dark to medium grayish brown silt that defines the local humus horizon (S.3). Embedded in both soils are stones that likely tumbled from final-phase architecture (F.1). As noted above, very few of these rocks were found west of construction. Instead, F.1 was concentrated on the east where it extends for at 1.74m beyond U.1 (the putative eastern terrace).

Structure 262-3

Structure 262-3 closes off the south side of the patio delimited by Str. 262-1 on the north and Str. 262-2 on the east. Structure 262-2 is 11.5m to the northeast and Str. 262-1 is 8m across the patio to the north. Digging here, directed by N. Ross, revealed all of Str. 262-3's final form. Roughly 55m² was cleared in the course of investigations conducted within Subop. 262D and H. Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.7m and 0.53m below modern ground surface outside and within architecture, in turn. Two major construction phases were identified in the course of this work.

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Date
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1	-	-	S.1	-	LCLII/III?
2	Str. 262-3-2 nd	U.1-4	-	-	LCLII/III
3	Str. 262-3-1 st	U.5-8, 11-18 20, 21	-	-	LCLIII/II
4	Str. 262-3-1 st	U.9, 10	-	-	LCLIII
5	Str. 362-3-1 st	U.19, 22	-	S.D.1	LCLIII/EPC
6	-	-	S.2, 3	F.1	

Time Span 1

The earliest activity attested to in the vicinity of Str. 262-3 is the deposition of at least 0.31m of a brownish yellow, very hard compacted, clayey loam with small yellow and red inclusions (S.1; its base was not revealed in our excavations). Stratum 1 was encountered in two discontinuous segments north and south of Str. 262-3-1st. Based on these exposures, the stratum rose 0.41m over 5.72m from north to south before gradually dropping 0.23m across 3m in the same direction. It appears, therefore, that the various versions of Str. 262-3 revealed in our investigations were raised atop a low eminence formed by the general contours of S.1's upper surface. The cultural materials retrieved from S.1 point to the conduct of activities engaged in by people who were residing nearby when this soil was accumulating.

Time Span 2

Fragments of what were likely two constructions were found underlying architecture pertaining to Str. 262-3-1st. Units 1 and 2 on the south seem to be parts of a stone wall that rises 0.14m above a cobble floor (U.4). The wall is at least 0.55m wide (its southern border was buried by later construction [U.6] whereas the pavement extends minimally 0.88m to the north where it was lost under architecture raised during TS.3. Based on this limited evidence, it appears that Str. 262-3-2nd on the south consisted of a surface-level building bounded by low but substantial stone foundations that enclosed at least one room that was paved with stones.

Unit 3, a ca. 0.2m-high cobble wall, was found protruding for at least 0.7m north of Str. 262-3-1st's final north basal facing (U.9). This construction faces west and does not run in a straight line. Instead it was traced for 0.2m north of U.9 before running 0.35m to the east and then resuming its northward course for 0.4m. Unit 3 is roughly 0.5m wide and, given its low preserved height, may have been a foundation that delimited the perimeter of a surface-level building.

In sum, Str. 262-3-2nd seems to consist of at least two surface-level edifices defined by low (0.14-0.2m high) stone foundations that were later covered by the construction of Str. 262-3-1st. The southern example is aligned approximately 96 degrees and contained at least one compartment paved with stones. Its northern counterpart is oriented about 10 degrees though little else can be said about it. Units 1-

4 were largely built of river cobbles set in a mud mortar. The flatter aspects of these rocks were generally directed outwards. Particular care seems to have been invested in selecting stones with flat faces for the inner (northern) face of U.2.

Time Span 3

During this interval the basic form of Str. 262-3-1st was achieved. This platform was bounded stone facings (U.5-8) that stood 0.36-0.6m tall (highest on the west). Units 5, 6, and 8 run fairly straight whereas U.7, the eastern basal wall, extends 2m north from its southeast corner with U.6 before stepping out 0.35m to the east and then continuing in a straight line to its intersection with U.8 at the platform's northeast corner.

Structure 262-3-1st's summit at this time contained four rooms divided by stone foundations that are 0.24-0.44m tall and measure 0.35-0.5m wide (U.13-16). Three of these enclosures are set in an east-west line on the northern portion of the superstructure where it overlooks the main plaza while the fourth, larger compartment backs all three of these rooms on the south. The northwestern and northeastern rooms measure 0.95x1.55m and 1.1x1.75m, respectively, and are floored with earth. The central compartment encompasses 1x1.88m and is surfaced with a stone floor (U.11) that stretches from the northern basal facing (U.8) south to a 0.12m-high stone step-up (U.12). Unit 12 gives way to another stone pavement (U.18) that extends 1m southward into the large southern compartment. The latter enclosure's 1.95x4.05m is almost completely taken up by a 0.25m-high, stone-faced bench (U.17). Unit 17 covers 1.47x4.05m, its westernmost 1.45x1.35m consisting of a block of stone; the remaining portion of the bench on the east is made up of earth fill faced by a 0.4m-thick stone facing.

Structure 262-3-1st's fill was primarily exposed within the hearting of the U.17 bench. Here a yellowish brown to strong brown, loosely compacted sandy loam (U.21) was set directly over Str. 262-3-2nd's U.4 to depths of 0.12-0.24m (U.21 slopes up from south to north). Covering this deposit is 0.08-0.23m of a very dark grayish brown, medium-coarse-textured loam (U.20). Both U.20 and 21 contain a moderately dense concentration of small to medium-size cobbles.

By the conclusion of TS.3, Str. 262-3-1st was a stone-faced, earth-and-stone-filled platform that stood 0.36-0.6m tall (highest on the west), measured 5.03x5.25m (across its approximate center), and was aligned roughly 96 degrees. There was a 0.35m-deep indentation along the southern 2m of the platform's eastern basal facing, but otherwise the core walls ran more-or-less straight. Str. 262-3-1st's superstructure consisted of four rooms delimited by low stone foundations; three set in an east-west line along the summit's north side and one larger compartment that backed them on the south. The northeast and northwest earthen-floored enclosures cover 1.93m² and 1.47m², in turn, and are separated by a stone-paved corridor that encompasses 1.88m². This last space extends from the northern basal facing to a 0.12m-high step up leading to the southern room. The latter measures 7.9m² and is also floored with stones. Very little of that surface is visible, however, as the 0.25m-high stone-faced bench set against the room's back (southern) wall encompasses 5.95m². The bench is filled with earth over its eastern extent but its westernmost 2m² is fashioned of solid

stone. It would appear, therefore, that Str. 262-3-1st's superstructure was entered from the north (the side facing the main plaza) via the central corridor and the step that led to the back (southern) room and bench. Low stone foundations separate the northeast and northwest compartments from the corridor and southern enclosure but there were no apparent obstacles to entering the first two compartments from the plaza to the north.

The walls, floors, and facings pertaining to Str. 262-3-1st were made primarily of river cobbles along with a few angular stones. The larger rocks were often packed round with chinking stones and all were set in a mud mortar. The flatter aspects of these stones were generally directed outwards.

Time Span 4

Structure 262-3-1st was enlarged slightly to the east and north during this interval by the addition of U.9 and 10. Unit 9 is a 0.34m-high facing set 0.53m north of U.8 that served as a terrace fronting the earlier northern basal wall. Unit 8 still projected 0.12m above the U.9 terrace. The latter runs the full length of the platform's north flank. On the west U.9 corners back to U.8 at the building's northwest corner while on the east it joins up with U.10. The latter is ca. 0.35m high and fronts (on the east) U.7 north of the inset in that facing. Unit 10 is 0.3m wide. How much, if any, of U.7 still projected above the addition is uncertain.

Structure 262-3-1st now measured 5.58x5.55m but retained its original height and orientation. There is no indication that the superstructure was modified at this point. If anything, the formality of the northern entrance may have been enhanced by the addition of a 0.34m-high by 0.53m-wide stone-faced terrace along the entirety of the platform's north side.

Units 9 and 10 were fashioned using large river cobbles packed round with chinking stones, all of the rocks set in a mud mortar. The flatters aspects of these stones are directed outwards.

Time Span 5

The final modifications that are recorded here consist of a minor change made to the summit and what may have been the first stages of an effort to expand Str. 262-3-1st's basal platform. The former activity involved the addition of U.19, a 0.37m-high by 0.37m-wide stone wall set atop the U.18 floor in the doorway to the large southern superstructure enclosure. Unit 19 spans the full width of the former entryway and it and the perishable wall it presumably supported seem to have been intended to block the former means of accessing the structure's southern room and bench. How, if at all, that enclosure was reached now is unclear.

Also added at this time is U.22. This is a 0.38m-tall stone wall that extends 0.65m west from U.9's western end (Str. 262-3-1st's northwest corner) and then runs at an angle of ca. 190 degrees for 5.9m before ending without a clear resolution. The significance of this construction is unclear. Its eastern (inner) face was not finished, thus suggesting that U.22 was not intended to serve as a free-standing foundation that

enclosed, on the west, a surface-level room bounded by Str. 262-3-1st on the east. On the other hand, there was no evidence that U.22 was backed by fill on the east nor that there was any way of retaining that fill on the south where 1.05m of open space separates U.22 from Str. 262-3-1st's southwest corner. That U.22 extends approximately 0.4m south and past the line of the platform's southwest corner may suggest that the former wall was intended to serve as part of an extensive reworking of, at least, Str. 262-3-1st's western and southern basal facings, replacing U.5 and 6, but that the planned renovation was never completed.

The remains of the nearly complete neck and shoulder fragments from a utilitarian, undecorated ceramic jar (S.D.1) were recovered 0.57m west of U.22, 1.55m south from the latter's northern end. Special Deposit 1 was found lying in situ on what was likely ancient ground surface and may represent the partial remains of a storage vessel or the fragments of such a container repurposed as a support for another, missing jar or bowl. The relative positions of U.22 and S.D.1 tentatively imply that the area immediately west of U.22 was a focal point of sustained domestic activities even as that wall was being built.

Overall, Str. 262-3-1st retained its previous height, basal dimensions, and orientation from TS.4 though now the superstructure's large southern room was generally inaccessible from the north. Efforts may have been underway at this point to enlarge the platform's overall extent though, if this was the case, the project never got beyond the construction of what was probably a new western basal facing. It may be that some domestic tasks, represented here by the large fragments of a ceramic jar that make up S.D.1, were already being repositioned west of this putative addition in anticipation of completing the platform's renovation. If this is the case, it appears that cessation of work on Str. 262-3-1st was precipitous.

Units 19 and 22 are fashioned primarily of river cobbles set in a mud mortar. Few chinking stones were noted in these constructions though some effort was devoted to orienting the flatter faces of the rocks outward.

Time Span 6

Following Str. 262-3-1st's abandonment, as much as 0.38m of a very dark grayish brown, medium coarse-textured loam (S.2) was deposited, covering most of the surviving final-phase architecture. Blanketing S.2 by 0.06-0.11m is the humus horizon (S.1) composed of a root-rich, dark grayish brown, silty loam. A moderately dense concentration of rocks that likely fell from Str. 262-3-1st (F.1) was found embedded in S.1 and 2, extending for as much as 2.2m away from final-phase construction.

Structure 262-4

Structure 262-4 is off of the patio bounded by Strs. 262-1-3, lying 4m west of Str. 262-1 and 0.6m south of Str. 262-5. Work conducted within Subop. 262E cleared all of the platform, uncovering ca. 33m² in the process. Excavations proceeded to maximum depths of 0.7m and 0.52m outside and within architecture, respectively. Two major

construction phases, each of which underwent at least one period of renovation, were recognized in the course of these investigations which were overseen by N. Ross.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	LCLII/III
2	Str. 262-4-2 nd	U.1-7	-	-	LCLIII/II
3	Str. 262-4-2 nd	U.8	-	-	LCLIII/II
4	Str. 262-4-1 st	U.1, 5, 6, 9-15, 17, 19, 20	-	-	LCLIII
5	Str. 262-4-1 st	U.16, 18	-	-	LCLIII/EPC
6	-	-	S.1, 2	F.1	

Time Span 1

During this interval at least 0.47m of a brownish yellow, fine-textured, clayey loam containing some pebbles and clay lumps (S.1) was laid down. Stratum 1's base was not revealed in our investigations. This soil rises 0.42m over 8m east-to-west and roughly 0.15m across 5m south-to-north. Those artifacts found in S.1 point to a human presence in the immediate area while this soil was being deposited.

Time Span 2

Structure 262-4-2nd was partly dismantled during the construction of Str. 262-4-1st. Consequently, what we can infer of the earlier building's general form and dimensions is based on fragments that were either buried by later building efforts or incorporated into Str. 262-4-1st.

Structure 262-4-2nd was apparently a platform bounded by stone facings on all sides (U.1-4). The best preserved of these elements is U.1, the western basal wall, that stands 0.39m tall above S.1's top (it intrudes 0.03m into that layer). The northern basal facing (U.2) is of comparable height (0.4m tall) though only the westernmost 1.45m of this construction still stood when Str. 262-4 was excavated. Solely the basal course in each of what we take to have been the eastern and southern basal walls (U.3 and 4) survived later renovations. The building was fronted on the north by a 0.21m-high stone-faced terrace (U.5) that ran the complete length of this face and was 0.6m wide. At its east end, U.5 forms an inset corner measuring 0.5m north-south by 0.35m east-west with U.6. The latter construction is a 0.12m-high by 0.35m-wide stone facing that extends 2.15m southward from its junction with U.5 before turning west to join the

putative line of Str. 262-4-2nd's east basal wall. Unit 6 may have functioned as a step providing access to Str. 262-4-2nd's summit.

The platform's fill varied from a very dark grayish brown silty loam containing numerous small cobbles (primarily found on the west) to a medium brown, hard-compacted loam largely devoid of stones (seen mostly on the east; all glossed as U.7). Backing the U.5 terrace on the north the fill consisted mostly of stones set in a mud mortar (also included in U.7). Any built-in features that the summit may have originally supported were not in evidence by the time of our study.

As TS.2 came to an end, Str. 262-4-1st was a stone-faced, earth-and-stone-filled platform that measured 4.05x4.49m, stood an estimated 0.4m tall, and was aligned roughly 9 degrees. The building was fronted on the north by a 0.21m high by 0.6m-wide stone-faced terrace above which the core platform's northern facing projected 0.19m. A 0.12m-tall stone step measuring 2.15m north-south by 0.35m wide east-west was set against the platform's northeast corner. The junction of the north terrace with this step created an inset corner covering 0.5x0.35m. The summit measured 2.55m north-south by an estimated 3.4m east-west (the space delimited by U.1/4) and may have been featureless. All facings were made using river cobbles set in as mud mortar. Chinking stones were packed around these rocks to level out courses. Purposefully modified rocks were recorded in U.5 and U.1 (a tuff slab) while some tuff chunks appeared in U.2. The flatter aspects of all these rocks were generally directed outwards.

Time Span 3

Unit 4, Str. 262-4-2nd's, southern basal facing was razed now and replaced by U.8. The latter construction is a stone facing that stands 0.45m high and overlaps U.4's south face; ca. 0.15m of U.4 still protrudes north of U.8's north flank. This renovation did not appreciably change Str. 262-4-2nd's basic dimensions, though the platform now encompassed 4.25m north-south by 4.49m east west, its summit expanded ca. 0.2m to the south by the construction of U.8 (covering 2.75x3.4m).

Time Span 4

Structure 262-4-1st is built over and incorporates aspects of its predecessor. Unit 1 remained in use as the platform's western basal facing though it was expanded approximately 0.25m north and 0.2m south to intersect with the newly added northern and southern basal walls (U.10 and 9, respectively). Unit 10 is 0.24m high and is built over the back (south) side of U.5. The latter, which had served as a Str. 262-4-2nd's northern terrace, may have continued to fulfill this function for its successor though now it was only 0.35m wide. Unit 11 defines the platform's east flank, running over the leveled remnant of U.3 and still fronted on the northeast by U.6. That last construction may have still served as a step leading up to the platform's summit. The southern facing, U.9, is built up against U.8, the latter's interior face continuing to be exposed. Unit 9 runs for 2.05m west from its junction with U.11 before turning south for 0.4m and then continuing westward to its junction with the newly expanded U.1. The reason for this dog-leg is unknown. The fill retained by U.1, 9-11 is a very dark brown silty loam in which a moderately dense concentration of small stones is embedded (U.20).

A 0.11m-high stone construction (U.12) intersects U.1, 0.6m south of its northern terminus. U.8, which projects 0.5m west from U.1 and runs for 1.7m north-south, may have served as a step leading to the summit, roughly analogous to U.6 on the building's east flank.

Structure 262-4-1st's earthen-floored summit consists of two compartments set in an east-west line. They are separated by a ca. 0.3m-high by 0.43m-wide stone wall (U.19) which runs the full north-south length of the superstructure. The western enclosure covers 1.5x2.95m and has a 0.17m-high stone shelf (U.13) built into its southeast corner. Unit 13 extends 0.54m west from its abutment with U.19 and measures 1.1m north-south. The room enclosure covers 1.6x3m and is largely taken up by a ca. 0.15m-high, stone-faced, 'L-shaped' bench (U.14) the long axis of which runs north-south along U.19's east face. The bench's north-south-oriented stem is 1.55m long by 0.45-0.67m wide (expanding from south to north). The leg then projects 0.9m east before turning to run 1.2m north to intersect the back (south) face of U.10 (the north basal facing). This wide northern segment of U.14 was divided into a north and south segment by the construction of U.15. Unit 15 is a 0.2m-wide by 0.2m-tall stone wall that may define the south side of a small storage receptacle built on or immediately north of U.14. Said cubicle covers 0.5x1.35m and was apparently closed on the east by a low wall comparable in size to U.15 (all glossed as U.15 here).

The last construction possibly raised during this interval is U.17, a 0.06m-high by 0.15m-wide stone wall that projects 0.5m south from Str. 262-4-1st's southeast corner. This construction may have been the eastern foundation for a surface-level building raised against the platform's south flank.

As TS.4 drew to a close, Str. 262-4-1st was a stone-faced, earth-and-stone-filled platform that stood 0.4m tall, measured 4.2x4.95m, and retained the general orientation of its predecessor (9 degrees). The building was fronted on the north by a 0.21m-high by 0.35m-wide stone-faced terrace that ran the full length of the building. Two stone projections were set against the platform, one on its northeast corner (0.12m high by 0.35m wide) and the other slightly north of the western facing's center (0.11m high by 0.5m wide). The summit was divided into two rooms placed in an east-west line and divided by a 0.3m-high by 0.43m-wide stone wall that ran the full north-south length of the superstructure. The western enclosure measures 4.43m² and has a 0.17m-high stone-faced shelf set in its southeast corner. This construction is 1.1m long north-south by 0.54m wide. The eastern room covers 4.8m² and is largely covered by a 0.15m-high, stone-faced, L-shaped bench that encompasses ca. 1.93m². A cubicle covering 0.68m² looks to have been set against the bench's northern flank, separated from it and the rest of the room by low stone walls. An earthen-floored room may have been set on ground level against Str. 262-4-1st's south side, demarcated on the east by a 0.06m-high by 0.15m-wide free-standing stone wall.

All walls and facings raised now were made primarily of horizontally laid river cobbles set in a mud mortar. One exception to this pattern was noted in U.11, the eastern basal wall, where three stones were set vertically. A few angular stones were noted within the eastern portion of U.9, U.13, and U.19. In general, there seemed to be fewer chinking stones in these constructions than had been the case for walls and

facings associated with Str. 262-4-2nd. The flatter aspects of all these rocks were generally directed outwards.

Time Span 5

During this interval only a few minor modifications were made to Str. 262-4-1st. The dogleg in the platform's southern basal wall (U.9) was removed by the construction of U.16. This wall buried the former inset, as well as a deposit of artifacts, and continued the line of U.9's exterior facing as it appeared over the wall's eastern 2.05m all the way to the platform's southwest corner. This addition required the expansion of U.1, the western basal wall 0.4m southward to meet with U.16 and form the building's southwest corner.

Unit 18, in turn, is a 0.12m-high by 0.43m-wide wall set atop U.1 at a point 0.9m north of its new southern terminus. This construction is 0.85m long north-south and extends 0.07m east of U.1's east face. What purpose(s) U.18 served is unknown; it may have functioned as a low shelf paired with U.13 which is directly across the western room from this new addition.

These additions had little effect of Str. 262-4-1st's overall form and appearance. The structure's basal walls now all ran straight without any insets and the western summit enclosure may have been outfitted with two low stone-faced shelves facing each other across its southern portion.

Units 16 and 18 are fashioned of river cobbles set in a mud mortar. One tuff block was included in U.16. Chinking stones are rare in these constructions and the effort to direct the flatter faces of these stones outward had become somewhat more sporadic.

Time Span 6

Following Str. 262-4-1st's abandonment, as much as 0.32m of a very dark grayish brown silty loam (S.2) accumulated against and over the platform's lower portions. This layer is capped, in turn, by 0.05-0.07m of a dark grayish brown, root-rich, silty loam (S.3). Embedded in S.2 and 3 is a moderate concentration of rocks likely fallen from final-phase architecture (F.1) that extend for at least 1m away from the building.

Structure 262-5

Structure 262-5 does not face onto the patio bounded by Strs. 262-1 through 3 but is 0.6m north of Str. 262-4 and ca. 2.5m northwest of Str. 262-1. Digging here, directed by L. True, within Subop. 262F uncovered ca. 20m² in the course of revealing all of Str. 262-5. Excavations were pursued to maximum depths of 0.68m and 0.6m outside and within construction, respectively. Two major building episodes were identified in the course of these investigations.

Time Spans

Time Construction

<u>Span</u>	<u>Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1, 2	-	LCLII/III?
2	Str. 262-5-1 st	U.1-8	-	-	LCLIII/II
3	Str. 262-5-1 st	U.9-13	-	-	LCLIII/EPC
4	-	-	S.3	F.1	

Time Span 1

The first event recorded in the vicinity of Str. 262-5 is the deposition of at least 0.13m of a yellow-brown, hard-compacted clay that contains some small stones (S.1; this layer's base was not revealed in our excavations). Stratum 1 was traced over 5.4m east-west over which distance it rose 0.31m in one gradual ascent west-to-east. Overlying S.1 by as much as 0.38m is a medium-brown soil with numerous very small white and orange inclusions (S.2). Stratum 2 also rises from west-to-east, ascending ca. 0.15m over 6.3m in this direction. The artifacts found within S.2 point to a human presence nearby while this soil was accumulating.

Time Span 2

During this interval Str. 262-5-1st consisted of a platform bounded on all sides by stone facings that rose to a height of 0.3m on the west and 0.15m on the east (U.1-4; the difference in elevation apparently reflects efforts to compensate for the rise in the underlying ground surface from west to east). The summit is divided into three spaces by stone foundations that are 0.15m tall by 0.19-0.27m wide (U.5 and 6). The largest of these spaces encompasses the entirety of the summit's northern half, measuring 0.9x1.9m whereas the southern superstructure consists of two cubicles set in an east-west line. The larger, western compartment encompasses 0.6x1.1m, its eastern neighbor covering an area of 0.5x0.6m. All of these spaces were apparently floored with a mix of stone and earth save the diminutive southeastern cubicle which was surfaced with earth. These distinctions match differences in the fill found underlying the compartments. A dense packing of stones in a brown earth matrix (U.7) was found in all portions of the platform except under the southeast enclosure where the platform's heaving consisted solely of brown earth (U.8).

By the conclusion of TS. 2, Str. 262-5-1st was a stone-faced, stone-and-earth-filled platform that stood 0.15-0.3m high, covered 2.4x2.5m, and was aligned approximately 265 degrees. The superstructure consists of three spaces separated by 0.15m-high by 0.19-0.27m-wide stone footings. The largest enclosure occupies the summit's north half and encompasses 1.7m². The remaining cubicles back this enclosure on the south and are set in an east-west line; the southwestern space covers 0.66m² whereas its eastern analogue measures 0.3m². The southeastern cubicle was surfaced with earth while the remaining spaces were floored with a mix of stones and earth.

All constructions associated with this version of Str. 262-5-1st were made of cobbles set in a mud matrix. Chinking stones were used to level out the base of the platform's northern basal facing (U.3) though were not much in evidence in the other walls and foundations recorded here. A few angular rocks were included in the short U.6 summit footing but were not noted elsewhere. In every case there had been an effort to direct the flatter aspects of those rocks making up footings and facings outwards.

Time Span 3

The platform raised during TS.2 remained unmodified during this interval. The major change visited on Str. 262-5-1st now was the addition of a relatively extensive platform added onto its predecessor's northwest corner. This construction is bounded by stone facings (U.9-12) that stood 0.15-0.3m high and lead up to a summit that is surfaced with a mix of stones and earth. As was noted for Str. 262-5-1st during TS.2, there is a tendency for the western facing to be higher than its eastern counterpart, possibly to take account of the rise of the land from west to east. There were no signs of any other constructions on the summit which appears to have been left open. The addition's fill consists of brown soil in which a few small to medium-size stones are embedded (U.13).

As TS.3 drew to a close, Str. 262-5-1st consisted of two stone-faced, stone-and-earth-filled platforms standing 0.15-0.3m tall and set catty-corner to each other. The building raised during TS.2 remained unchanged while a comparably tall platform covering 3x3.2m (measured across its center) and oriented ca. 262 degrees was appended to its northwest corner. All but the easternmost 0.7m of U.2 and the southernmost 1.2m of U.3 (the northern and western basal facings of the original platform) were covered by this addition. The addition's summit was paved with a mix of stones and earth but was otherwise featureless.

All constructions pertaining to this iteration of Str. 262-5-1st are made of river cobbles set in a mud matrix. The stones used to fashion U.9-12 (the addition's basal facings) are generally oriented so that their flatter aspects are directed outwards. Very few chinking stones were noted in any of these walls.

Time Span 4

After Str. 262-5-1st's abandonment, as much as 0.37m of a dark brown, moderately hard-compacted, clayey soil (S.3) was deposited. This humus horizon contained a moderately dense concentration of rocks that likely originated from final-phase architecture (F.1). Feature 1 was traced for at least 0.7m away from Str. 262-5-1st.

Structure 262-8

Structure 262-8 is ca. 58m north of Str. 262-5 and is paired with a poorly preserved edifice, Str. 262-17, an estimated 5m to the southeast. Excavations conducted by L. True within Subop. 262I cleared the entirety of this building; 27m² were

exposed here overall. Digging was pursued to a maximum depth of 0.62m outside construction, revealing two major construction phases.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1, 2	-	LCLII/III?
2	Str. 262-8-2 nd	U.1, 2	-	-	LCLII/III
3	Str. 262-8-1 st	U.3-8	-	-	LCLIII/II
4	-	-	S.3	F.1	

Time Span 1

The first event chronicled in the vicinity of Str. 262-8 was the deposition of at least 0.2m of a light brown clay with numerous white rock inclusions (S.1). Stratum 1 was uncovered over 1.02m south of Str. 262-8 where it descended 0.11m across that distance from south to north. Blanketing S.1 by 0.18-0.2m is a lighter brown clay with fewer rock inclusions (S.2). Like its predecessor, S.2 also drops down from south to north, descending 0.62m over 6.67m in that direction. It appears, therefore, that the several iterations of Str. 262-8 were set on a gradual south-to-north slope. The recovery of artifacts from S.2 indicates that people were residing in the immediate area while it was being deposited.

Time Span 2

Two fragments (U.1 and 2) of what appear to have been stone foundations that possibly delimited the perimeter of a surface-level building emerged in the base of our excavations. The most thoroughly cleared of these elements, U.1, is 0.25-0.33m (one rock) wide, runs for 2.9m from beneath U.3 on the north at an orientation of ca. 190 degrees. Unit 2, 2.5m to the northwest, is 0.17-0.22m (one rock) wide, protrudes 0.15m above the excavation's base, and was traced for 1.15m where it ran at an azimuth of about 357 degrees. Unit 2 seemingly extends under U.8 and beyond our trench limits to the north. Units 1 and 2 might have been stone foundations for perishable upper walls that defined the southeast and northwest sides of an earthen-floored surface-level building. Alternatively, they may be parts of two distinct buildings the other elements of which we did not encounter. Both walls were fashioned of river cobbles set in a mud mortar. The flatter aspects of U.1's rocks are directed to the southeast whereas on U.2 there is no evidence that its stones were selected for their flatter faces.

Time Span 2

Structure 262-8-1st consists of two elements. On the northeast are the remains of what seems to have been a surface-level building defined on all sides by stone foundations that are 0.15-0.3m high by 0.3-0.4m wide (U.3-6; one rock tall by one to two

rocks across). The building's north corner may have been inset 0.2x0.35m. Two possible doors are located in the edifice's east and west corners; the former is 1.6m wide while the latter is 0.4m across. The earthen-floored interior measures 2x2.7m and contains no built-in furniture.

Adjoining this construction on the southwest is a pavement made of small stones that encompasses 1.6x2.25m (U.8; measured across its center). This floor is bordered on the southeast by a stone wall that stands 0.2m high and is 0.4m wide (U.7). Unit 7 intersects the southwest foundation of the northeast room at a point 0.45m northwest of that enclosure's south corner, and runs along the full length of U.8's southeast side. There is no evidence that there ever were any walls sheltering U.8's southwest and northwest flanks, the pavement abutting U.6 on the northeast.

By the end of TS.3, Str. 262-8-1st was a surface-level building aligned roughly 56 degrees and composed of two formalized spaces adjoining each other in a northeast-southwest line. The northeastern component is an earthen-floored room covering 5.4m² and accessed through doors in its eastern (1.6m across) and western (0.4m wide) corners. The stone footings that bounded this space stood 0.15-0.3m tall and were 0.3-0.4m wide. On the southwest, a stone pavement encompassing 3.6m² was bordered on its northeast by the aforementioned room's southwest foundation and on the southeast by a 0.2m-high by 0.4m-wide wall. This surface was apparently left open on its southwest and northwest flanks.

All constructions were built of river cobbles, mixed with some angular white rocks, set in a mud mortar. There was some effort devoted to orienting the flatter aspects of the rocks comprising foundations outwards.

Time Span 4

Following Str. 262-8-1st's abandonment, as much as 0.27m of a dark-brown, fine-grained silt (S.3; the local humus horizon) accumulated and formed over S.2. Embedded in S.3 is a light concentration of rocks that likely originated from TS.3 architecture (F.1). Feature 1 was traced for 1.6-2.39m away from Str. 262-8-1st.

Structure 262-9

Structure 262-9 closes off the north side of a patio that is defined by Str. 262-6 to the west and Strs. 262-7, 10, and 11 to the south. Str. 262-6 is 1.5m to the west whereas Str. 262-10 is 10m across the patio. Digging here was restricted to a 1x1.96m trench (Subop. 262K; 1.96m² cleared in all) set against the edifice's north side. Excavations in Subop. 262K reached a maximum depth of 0.53m below modern ground surface outside construction. One major building episode was identified in the course of these investigations which were overseen by N. Ross.

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Date
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1	-	-	S.1	-	LCLII/III
2	Str. 262-9-1 st	U.1, 2	-	-	LCLIII/II/EPC
3	-	-	S.2, 3	F.1	

Time Span 1

The first activity identified in the vicinity of Str. 262-9 is the deposition of at least 0.22m of a yellowish brown, hard-compacted, clayey loam that contains fragments of decaying yellow rock (S.1; the layer's base was not exposed in our excavations). Stratum 1 was revealed maintaining the same level for a distance of 0.83m running north-south and yielded some cultural material.

Time Span 2

Structure 262-9-1st is represented in Subop. 202K by what appears to be the platform's northern basal terrace facing (U.1) and a second riser leading towards the summit (U.2). Unit 1 is a stone construction standing 0.25m high that fronts an earthen-floored terrace that is 0.97m wide. Unit 2 rises 0.31m above that tread and may lead to the summit or another terrace. Both elements are oriented approximately 86 degrees and are made of cobbles set in a mud mortar. The flatter aspects of these rocks are directed outwards.

Time Span 3

After Str. 262-9-1st was forsaken as much as 0.28m of a dark grayish brown silty loam (S.2) was laid down covering all but the uppermost 0.04m of U.2. Capping S.2 by 0.05m is the humus horizon (S.1) formed on S.2. Embedded in both layers is a light concentration of stones that likely fell from final-phase architecture (F.1). Feature 1 was traced for 0.89m north of U.1 though it may continue beyond Subop. 262K in this direction.

Structure 262-15

Structure 262-15 appears on the surface as mound, with indistinct borders. It has a diameter of roughly 6m and stands about 0.35m tall. Structure 262-15 lies ca. 38m northeast of Str. 262-2 in an area of other low rises. During the initial mapping of Site 262 in 1988 it was unclear if Str. 262-15 was a purposeful human construction or a natural feature. The excavation of Subop. 262AB, a 1x3m trench oriented 60 degrees and located about 1m below the eminence's summit, was intended to address this issue. Digging was pursued here under N. Ross' direction to a maximum depth of 0.41m below modern ground surface resulting in good evidence for human occupation and somewhat ambiguous signs of construction.

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Date
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1	Str. 262-15-1 st ?	-	S.1	-	MPC
2	Str. 262-15-1 st ?	-	S.2	-	MPC/LPrecl/ LCLIII

Time Span 1

The earliest activity identified here was the deposition of at least 0.16m of a moderately hard-compacted, grayish brown loam that includes fragments, mostly yellow, of decaying rock (S.1; the layer's base was not encountered). Stratum 1 rises 0.03m over 0.54m west to east before ascending at the relatively rapid rate of 0.19m across 0.35m in this direction. Subsequently, the upper surface of S.1 runs fairly flat for the remaining 1.08m to the east that it was uncovered in Subop. 262AB. The recovery of significant quantities of cultural materials from S.1, especially lithic debris, points to a human presence in the vicinity when this soil was deposited. It may well be that S.1 was introduced as earthen fill integral to the creation of Str. 262-15-1st.

Time Span 2

Covering S.1 by 0.19-0.32m is a hard-compacted, grayish brown loam (S.2). Stratum 2 also yielded considerable quantities of artifacts, once more mostly consisting of debris from stone tool manufacture.

The behavioral significance of S.1 and 2 is unclear. They may be the result of natural soil formation processes, in which case Str. 262-15 would be a natural hill on the west slope of which, at least, there was a prolonged human occupation. Alternatively, these strata could be components of an earthen fill introduced in the course of constructing an extensive, if not tall, platform. In that instance, the included cultural materials were likely redeposited from their original find spots during construction. Yet again, what we designated as a structure may simply represent a trash deposit that accumulated over a protracted span. At present, we tend to favor the second interpretation as Str. 262-15-1st would thereby match other earthen platforms raised during the Middle Preclassic, the period of use indicated by analyses of the artifacts recovered here.

Suboperation 262AA

Suboperation 262AA is a 0.5x1m trench dug 6m east of Str. 262-3 and 6.4m west of Str. 262-2 in an area seemingly devoid of construction. These excavations, which were supervised by N. Ross, reached a maximum depth of 0.6m below modern ground surface and uncovered remnants of a construction that likely faced southwards.

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Date
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1	-	-	S.1	-
2	Str. 262-Sub1-1 st	U.1	-	-
3	-	-	S. 2, 3	-

Time Span 1

At least 0.2m of a hard-compacted, yellow-brown soil with yellow and black inclusions was deposited now (S.1; its base lies beyond excavation limits). Stratum 1 underlies U.1 and does not contain cultural material. The last observation implies the absence of a significant human occupation in the area while S.1 was accumulating.

Time Span 2

Structure 262-Sub1-1st is represented here by a stone wall that stood an estimated 0.15m tall by 0.2wide (U.1). Unit 1 was traced for 1m over its northwest-southeast-trending course. It is unclear whether this cobble wall faced north or south or if it served as a foundation delimiting a surface-level building or a facing for a low platform. Given that there were no signs of the building on ground surface we tentatively presume that it was not a platform but an edifice that sat directly on ancient ground level.

Time Span 3

Following Str. 262-Sub1-1st's abandonment, at least 0.1m of a yellow-brown clayey loam (S.2) was deposited, covering all but the uppermost portions of U.1. Covering S.2 by 0.25m is a dark grayish brown silty loam (S.3).

Architectural Summary

The structures investigated at Site 262 ranged from surface-level edifices delimited by rock foundations to stone-faced, earth-and-stone-filled platforms that were 0.15-1.21m tall. The basic ground plan for the platforms consisted of a core construction bounded by stone facings. We suspect that all of the studied platforms started out this way; that was certainly the case for Strs. 262-3-1st and 262-5-1st. Terraces were seemingly added on later to the smaller buildings (such as Str. 262-3-1st) or may have been part of the original construction (as was seemingly the case with Str. 262-2-1st). In most instances, terraces were 0.11-0.87m tall by 0.3-2.05m wide, the narrower examples being little more than steps leading to the summit. Most terraces were surfaced with earth though two of Str. 262-1-1st's southern terraces were paved with stone. The overall dimensions of platforms were spread across a continuum 15.6-96.5m² with the very real possibility that Str. 262-1-1st, with a north-south width of 9.75m, was larger still.

Platform superstructures were variably organized. Structure 262-3-1st supported one of the more complex arrangements; three relatively small rooms (1.47-1.93m²) set in an east-west line overlooking the plaza and backed on the south by a larger compartment (7.9m²) most of which was filled by a 0.25m-high, L-shaped bench that

covered 5.95m². The building raised atop Str. 262-4-1st was composed of two rooms, also set in an east-west line. These compartments measured 4.43m² and 4.8m². The larger of these two enclosures (the eastern example) contained a 0.15m-high, L-shaped bench that encompassed 1.93m². The cubicle covering 0.68m² that is set against the bench's north flank may well have been used for storage. The 0.17m-high stone shelf that encompasses 0.6m² and was built into the western compartment's southeast corner may point to the use of this space for storage. The summit enclosure partly cleared on Str. 262-1-1st measures 2.74m north-south and also contains a bench or shelf, this one 0.13m high by 0.85m wide. There seems to have been at least one more compartment within this superstructure, this one lying immediately north of, and 0.38m below, the aforementioned room. It covers 1.03m north-south and contains what may have been a stone-faced shelf measuring 0.27m high by 0.55m wide by 0.81m long. Any other enclosures that might have once graced the summit were not exposed. Structure 262-5-1st's summit juxtaposes a relatively large, paved, open space covering 9.6m² on the northwest with three small rooms to the southeast encompassing 0.3m²-1.7m²; no built-in furniture came to light in any of these cubicles. The room found atop Str. 262-2-1st is the largest identified at the settlement, measuring 16.8m². As it is possible that this edifice was never completed, we are not sure if the summit compartment was to be left open or would have been subdivided into several smaller spaces as work on Str. 262-2-1st proceeded. Of the 12 summit rooms investigated at Site 262, five were paved with stones while the rest were left with earthen floors.

Only one surface-level building was thoroughly cleared (Str. 262-8-1st); isolated elements of the remainder having been identified beneath later construction (Strs. 262-3-2nd and 262-8-2nd) and in a test pit (Str. 262-Sub1-1st). In general, these edifices consist of earthen-floored rooms bounded by low stone footings that likely supported perishable upper walls made of bajareque. Structure 262-8-1st includes one earthen-floored compartment measuring 5.4m² adjoining a stone pavement that encompasses 3.6m² and is bounded by rock foundations only on the southeast and northeast.

The most common material used in crafting facings, foundations, and floors is river cobbles, often packed round with small chinking stones and set in a mud mortar. Angular rocks, often composed of a white stone (tentatively identified as tuff in the field) comprise minority components in walls that were parts of Strs. 262-3-1st, 262-4-2nd, 262-4-1st, 262-5-1st, and 262-8-1st. Faced stones are very rare components of constructions raised here though they were recorded on Str. 262-1-1st where the southern basal terrace may have been made exclusive of tuff masonry. Otherwise, isolated shaped rocks, most likely of tuff, were reported on Strs. 262-4-2nd and 262-4-1st. All stones were set in a mud mortar and most of the unmodified rocks were oriented so that their flatter aspects faced outwards.

If, as seems likely, Structure 262-15-1st was a purposeful construction, it was fashioned of earth without any obvious stone facings or floors. This building style conforms with that seen on other edifices raised throughout the Naco valley and in its environs during the Middle Preclassic.

Chronological Summary

The primary period of construction and occupation at Site 262 falls within the relatively narrow constraints of the Terminal Classic (LCLIII). All but one of the investigated buildings were seemingly raised during this span though there are hints that people were present at this locale towards the end of the Late Classic (LCLII); diagnostics of this span were found in layers antedating observed constructions at Strs. 262-1, 262-2, 262-3, 262-5, 262-8, and 262-9. Structures 262-8-2nd and 262-3-2nd may also have been built at this time. There is also pretty consistent evidence that occupation here may have persisted into the Early Postclassic; markers of this phase were found at Strs. 262-1, 262-2, 262-3, 262-4, 262-5, and 262-9. No new edifices were apparently raised now though the final modifications made to Strs. 262-5-1st, 262-4-1st, and 262-3-1st possibly pertain to this interval.

Antedating these events was the erection of Str. 262-15-1st. This building was apparently raised during the Middle Preclassic though, once in place it was seemingly used by people who resided in the area during the Late Preclassic and Terminal Classic. We cannot be sure how many of the other low rises noted in the immediate area (glossed here as Strs. 262-13, 262-14, and 262-16) were also buildings raised at this time. At present, all we can say with some certainty is that the first known settlement at Site 262 during the Middle Preclassic was succeeded by a protracted span when the site was little used, if at all. This situation began to change towards the end of the Late Classic (LCLII) when populations once again settled in this zone. Human numbers and construction activity apparently peaked during the Terminal Classic (LCLIII), occupation of the settlement continuing into the first years of the Early Postclassic when the locale was abandoned. That abandonment was apparently relatively rapid, leaving construction projects initiated at Strs. 262-2-1st and 262-3-1st unfinished.