Appendix C: Sites used in this analysis

In this appendix I will briefly describe and classify all sites used in this dissertation. As described in chapter 5, there were seven site types: (1) civic-ceremonial centre; (2) civic; (3) castillo fortification complex; (4) residential; (5) fortification; (6) midden; (7) funerary. Each type is listed here; any site could have more than one function. This typology is appropriate for classification, but “civic-ceremonial centre” and “castillo fortification complex” were not used in the GIS database; this is because civic-ceremonial centres have both civic and residential functions, and the Castillo fortification complex is a specialized type with civic, fortified, and residential functions. The original types are listed here for reference. Note that some sites may be classified as civic and residential but are not considered civic-ceremonial centres; I consider civic-ceremonial centres to be monumental and to contain extensive residential space and classify residential sites that have a small civic or community structure (e.g. a plaza) as both civic and residential. My criteria for classifying sites this way is described for each site.

Site descriptions and type classifications are drawn primarily from Willey (1953) but are also based on a pedestrian survey of approximately 60 Early and Middle Virú sites conducted in 2010, from satellite remote-sensing analysis of each site, and from other publications where appropriate. Site dates are primarily derived from re-seriation of surface ceramic assemblages (see chapter 4) but several sites are dated instead through excavation. Dating criteria is described for each site, and lists of sites dated through seriation and those dated by other means are presented in appendix A.

Remote-sensing methods used in this analysis are briefly described in chapter 5. This appendix draws heavily from these methods and the sites classified here form the principal component of the maps and spatial analyses conducted in chapters 5 and 6. Sites were initially relocated in Google Earth, a freely-available satellite mapping program, and mapped using satellite imagery in ArcGIS. Archaeological sites can be difficult to identify in satellite imagery, modern development has destroyed or damaged some archaeological sites, and in some cases it was not possible to relocate a site that Willey (1953) had described. For these reasons, I include a measure of mapping accuracy. This refers to both the ability to relocate Willey’s original sites with any degree of precision and the ability to draw an accurate outline map of that site based on
available satellite imagery. In some cases the original site cannot be relocated precisely; in these cases I drew a polygon matching the approximate site size (as described by Willey) over the point where Willey depicted that site on a master map of the valley. This allows these sites to be included in spatial analysis with as much accuracy as possible.

I believe that data accessibility is important and that the complex archaeology and geography of the Virú Valley is best understood when it can be made available for visualization through programs such as Google Earth. I also believe that data should be available for further analysis through GIS and other mapping software. I therefore list the approximate size and location coordinates of each site (Projected Coordinate System, WGS 1984). I have also made a kmz file available to download with this dissertation and appendices, and will make this file available when possible. This file contains the site outline polygons and several analyses relevant to chapters 5 and 6. The file can be exported to GIS platforms for further analysis.

Site descriptions:

V-1 (Cemeterio San Ildefonso)
Time period(s): Middle and Late Virú
Type: Funerary
Size: 1.116 ha
Location: 8.3971° S, 78.7794° W
Description: This is a relatively large (75 m x 130 m) cemetery located on the sandy north margin of the middle valley (Willey 1953: 228). Willey observed approximately 200 looted graves at this site during his survey in the 1940s. Cemeteries stretch along the entire northern margin of the valley downstream from the valley neck and rocky foothills of the Andes, but they are particularly concentrated in this area of the valley. Most of these cemeteries date to Late Virú and/or the Late Epoch, but V-1 has some graves that likely dated to Middle Virú as well. Willey dated the cemetery to the Late Virú Period based on a large collection of Moche/Huancaco-style corporate or burial ware sherds, but there is also one Gallinazo Incised sherd, diagnostic of the Middle Virú Period. Seriating the site based solely on domestic ware ceramics—which is the method I use in this study—dates this site strictly to the Middle Virú Period, however. The large amount of diagnostic Late Virú corporate ware ceramics at this site provide overwhelming evidence that the domestic ware seriation in this case is incorrect, but sites that are purely cemeteries are expected to have significantly more corporate ware ceramics than residential sites and seriation based solely on domestic ware, as described in Chapter 4, is problematic.
Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Ford (archival notes) provided a precise description of the location of this site, and an area of looter’s pits covering the extent that Willey described for this site is clearly visible in this location.

V-5
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.453 ha
Location: 8.3953° S, 78.7672° W
Description: V-5 is a 14 m x 19.3 m rectangular house structure at the base of Cerro San Ildefonso on its western side (Willey 1953: 240). Cerro San Ildefonso is a long, sloping hill spur that juts southward from the mass of rocky foothills that sits between the Virú Valley and the Moche Valley to the north. The southern tip of the hill sits right on the north margin of the valley and several archaeological sites surround and sit on this end of the hill (Willey 1953: fig. 49). Willey dated all of these sites to the Late Epoch but the new seriation, on which I have based the current dates for all sites, shows that most of these sites also have an earlier Late Virú component and V-5 was first occupied during the Middle Virú Period. Willey described V-5 only as a single structure isolated from the other nearby structures on the hill and associated with a small midden area and some evidence of earlier rock-walled structures. Ford (archival notes) described the site in more detail and also associated it with a cemetery just south of the structure. Ford noted that the area of occupation extended west and south of main structure. The architecture of the main structure at this site is similar to that of the other sites on this hill, which date purely to later periods, and it likely was also built during the Late Virú Period or Late Epoch but was built over an earlier Middle Virú occupation.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent.

V-11 (San Francisco Cemetery)
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Midden; Funerary
Size: 0.312 ha
Location: 8.3985° S, 78.7505° W
Description: Willey (1953: 230) considered this to be an Early Virú midden that was re-used as a cemetery in the Late Virú and Late Epoch. However, re-seriation of this site demonstrates a Middle Virú occupation as well, and Ford recovered one sherd of Gallinazo Negative here. The cemetery, at least, is 30 m x 100 m in extent but Willey did not describe the size of the midden. Ford (archives) noted that there were rock-walled structures approximately 200 m behind and uphill from this site, but Willey did not mention these and it is unclear if they are associated with the site (these structures cannot be relocated on satellite imagery). Given the Gallinazo Negative sherd and low quantity of Castillo domestic ware, I interpret this site as an Early Virú midden with intrusive burials from Middle Virú through to the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Apart from the general map of the entire valley, Willey does not map this site. Because this site has a very generic description and is in close proximity to other sites it
is not possible to map it with any assurance. Looting activity, visible clearly on satellite imagery in this area, shows essentially one continuous cemetery rather than the four discrete ones that Willey documented, and each of these is larger than what Willey describes for V-11. Middens located on the sandy margins of the valley are not visible on satellite imagery. In order to account for this site in this analysis I have drawn a polygon of 30 m x 100 m and placed it over the looted cemetery that lies closest to where Willey placed this site on the master map of all sites.

**V-15 (San Juan Cemetery)**

**Time period(s):** Middle and Late Virú

**Type:** Funerary

**Size:** 0.139 ha

**Location:** 8.3659° S, 78.7352° W

**Description:** Willey (1953: 229) describes this as a well-looted cemetery in the Queneto Quebrada below the hilltop Castillo San Juan. The cemetery corporate ware collection is largely Late Virú and the small domestic ware collection dates to Middle Virú. There is a single Gallinazo Broad-Line Incised sherd indicating a small Middle Virú presence in the cemetery. The Middle Virú size of this cemetery is likely a small portion of the site’s overall size.

**Mapping accuracy:** Good. Willey (1953: Fig. 23) mapped this site along with other sites in the quebrada, so its placement is accurate. However the total extent of cemeteries is difficult to see in aerial photos so its extent is approximate.

**V-16/V-62 (Castillo de San Juan)**

**Time period(s):** Early through Late Virú

**Type:** Castillo Fortification Complex

**Size:** 1.767 ha

**Location:** 8.3645° S, 78.7337° W

**Description:** The Castillo de San Juan occupies the entire crest of a semi-isolated hill that forms the north arm of the Queneto Quebrada, which expands westward from the Virú Valley at the entrance to the valley neck when coming from the highlands (the river flows north-south through the valley neck). This is one of six Castillo Fortification Complexes in the middle Virú Valley and one of four that guard the valley neck itself, a strategic location for controlling the movement of people between the coast and the highlands and for protecting the intake canals for the major irrigation works of lower Virú. The Queneto Quebrada was also important both for the Queneto Temple (V-17) and because a road to the Moche Valley to the north ran through this quebrada, so the location of the Castillo San Juan at the head of the quebrada is significant for protecting this quebrada. The hill itself is steep with sheer, rocky sides, and the site was at least partially enclosed by a perimeter wall. There are actually two separate castillos here; V-16, which Willey dated to the Middle Virú Period, and V-62, which Willey dated to Late Virú. The occupational history of this site is more complicated than that, however, and is addressed below. This is a complicated site that Willey (1953: 158-160, 224-225, fig. 23) describes in detail so I will only highlight the most important parts for my purposes here.
V-16 is situated immediately downslope of the highest prominence of the hill, 400 m west of the edge of the hill that faces the valley, giving it the impression of being built back from the valley but being more prominent from the head of the Queneto Quebrada. V-16 is built is approximately 90 m higher than the floor of the quebrada below it. V-62 is located on the eastern extremity of the hill, approximately 50 m lower than V-16, prominently overlooking Virú and the valley neck some 40 m below. The V-16 sector of the site is enclosed by two stone perimeter walls, the outer one being massive and largely or entirely artificial. This wall, which is fairly well-preserved and clearly visible on satellite imagery, surrounds the entire western or Queneto-facing end of the hill and then came together with a natural stone dike on the eastern edge of V-16 to enclose the sector and to connect with a second ridge-top wall. This second wall runs along the entire razor-like crest of the hill, artificial in places but taking advantage of natural outcrops when possible, and connects to V-62. This is a single wall rather than a perimeter or enclosure wall and as such it serves to divide the hill in two, but Willey (1953: 159) thought of it as protecting V-62 by preventing it from being surrounded and cut-off from V-16. The site’s hilltop location and defensive wall features definitively mark this site as a fortification, but there is also clearly civic space at the site, and the Castillo Fortification Complex style of site also adds another dimension of complexity; these sites seem to be built not just as fortifications but as signifiers of power and border markers.

There are two areas within the outer perimeter wall that encloses the V-16 sector of the site there are two areas. The highest prominence of the hill does not have any structures on it but it has been intentionally cleared to be free of all but a few large boulders. Below this to the southeast is a second perimeter wall enclosing an area of 38 m x 65 m within which is an adobe platform, several rooms, and an area of looted graves that are likely from an intrusive cemetery (Willey 1953: 159). The southeastern area of this inner enclosure contains abundant domestic refuse in the form of both sherds and shell. I visited this site on October 12, 2010 but have little to add to Willey’s description other than to note that there is a large quantity of both chipped and ground lithic material here, supporting the interpretation of domestic occupations at this site. The adobe platform is 12 m x 19 m, flat-topped and 2-3 m high, and may be largely built of earth and rock, taking advantage of natural outcrops, with simply a façade and upper portion built of adobe. This trait seems to be a hallmark of the Castillo Fortification Complexes in that the artificial construction is of relatively limited extent but takes advantage of natural hills to create structures that appear truly monumental.

Ford and Willey made two ceramic collections from the V-16 sector of the site (Willey 1953: 160). The larger collection came from within the inner enclosure and included nearly 1000 sherds that date very securely to the Middle Virú Period. Neither Ford nor Willey make it clear which part of the site the second collection came from but it was considerably smaller and consisted of only 43 domestic ware sherds. This collection dated to both Early and Middle Virú, however. Two Puerto Morin White-on-Red (most common in Early Virú but also found in Middle and Late Virú) and one Callejon-style sherd (diagnostic of Middle Virú but rare throughout the valley) were among the few corporate ware sherds in this second collection. It is difficult to determine whether this second collection should be left as separate, added to the larger collection, or discarded as poor-quality data. When added to the larger collection, the proportion of HPP sherds, pointing to an Early Virú occupation, become very small. However, the site’s hilltop location, cleared area without structures, and perimeter wall enclosing the highest part of the hill, all closely match the hilltop retreat style of Early Virú fortification, as seen at V-80 and V-132. I choose to view this site as first being settled by a small, ephemeral
Early Virú occupation, purely as a retreat to be used in times of duress, with the castillo portion of the site—clearly the main occupation—built over this earlier space. Further research at this site would address the changing nature of fortification through the Virú Period.

The V-62 sector of the site is less complex, though no less monumental, than the V-16 sector. The wall that runs along the ridge of the hill between the two sectors ends in a perpendicular wall at the V-62 end; this wall runs back and forth across the hill crest twice and then runs southeast again to connect with the foundation of the V-62 castillo platform structure (Willey 1953: 225). As with the V-16 platform, this platform is built with a stone foundation and stone reinforcing walls while the bulk of the structure itself is made of adobes. Based on Willey’s descriptions of the architectural style and the type of adobes (cane-marked, mold-made rectangular adobes of similar size) both this platform and the V-16 platform have very similar architecture. The V-62 platform is built in line with the topography of the eastern end of the hill so its shape is not exactly square or rectangular. The base of the mound is 37.55 m on one dimension and 60.64 m on the other. The platform is built as three terraces but Willey did not describe the total height of the structure; I estimate that it rose 8 m higher than the average level of the hill crest but adobe façade walls were built down the hillslope (essentially adobe retaining walls enclosing natural rock) to give the impression that the structure itself was far larger than it was in reality. Willey (1953: 225, fig. 23) noted some destroyed adobe and rock-walled structures on either end of the mound that were apparently residential occupations. I visited this site on October 12, 2010 and noted abundant chipped lithics—including several pieces of a high-quality black chert, which is fairly rare in Virú—and shell, bolstering the interpretation that there were large residential occupations at this site.

Ford (archives) collected a large domestic ware ceramic assemblage here (1801 sherds), and corporate ware ceramics collected here included 7 Callejon-style sherds, diagnostic of the Middle Virú Period but rare throughout the valley, as well as two Puerto Morin white-on-red sherds, most common in Early Virú but also found in Middle and into Late Virú (see Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2). Ford dated this assemblage to the Late Virú Period but based on the current seriation it dates to both Middle and Late Virú. Because of this later date Willey thought that V-16 was built during the Middle Virú Period and V-62 during the Late Virú Period. Given the new seriation I argue for a different occupational history of this site. V-16 was first a small, rarely-used Early Virú hilltop retreat-style fortification, on the order of Cerro Bitín (V-80). The site was expanded considerably during the Middle Virú Period and both V-16 and V-62, and the defensive walls associated with these, were built to be a castillo-style fortification, serving a truly military or strategic function but also serving as impressive, monumental symbols of power. Both sites also had large domestic populations, but at present it is not possible to determine whether these were military personal, occasional pilgrims visiting the site for festivals, or were true towns built around these platforms, which likely served a civic function alongside their military and symbolic roles. V-16 was not used beyond the Middle Virú Period but V-62 continued function through the Late Virú Period as a town and the V-62 castillo was likely maintained and possibly augmented through the Late Virú Period.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. In order to maintain continuity in the GIS database I map each site separately. I include the rock wall that runs along the hill crest as part of the map for V-62. V-16 is mapped as the space within the outer perimeter wall surround it.

**V-17 (Queneto Temple)**
Time period(s): Uncertain. Possibly Initial Period/Guañape through Late Epoch
Type: Civic
Size: 0.365 ha
Location: 8.3621° S, 78.743° W
Description: This is one of the most interesting sites in Virú. The Queneto Temple consists of three plazas, built in-line along the sloping floor of the Queneto Quebrada, such that one would first enter Plaza A through a single narrow doorway (1.7 m wide) on the south side of the temple, would then be directed to Plaza B, smaller but 2.25 m higher than Plaza A, through a similar narrow stairway (Willey 1953: 342). At the back of Plaza B there is an unprepared entranceway to Plaza C, in-line with the other two entrances and 1 m higher and smaller with considerably less complex architecture than Plaza B. This gives the impression that ceremonial participants would pass through Plaza A and some would be permitted to Plaza B, but Plaza C was a reserved sacred or preparation area. Plazas A and B each have massive walls (Willey measured Plaza A as having 2.7 m wide walls) faced with cyclopean stones that vary in size from 1-3 m high and 0.5-1 m wide (Willey 1953: 340). These stones are irregularly-shaped. Plaza A and B both have standing phallic monoliths in line with the entranceways, towards the back of each plaza. The site clearly has a ceremonial or ritual function.

The plazas are large and open. The plaza floors are largely free of ceramic and domestic refuse and Ford’s ceramic collections at the site are relatively small—though by no means the smallest in the valley—but if this was used for large public ceremonies and pilgrimages it is likely that the floors of the site would be kept clean and free of domestic refuse. The interior space of Plaza A is 34 m x 45 m, Plaza B is 31 m x 31 m with a 10 m x 14 m entranceway and Plaza C is 10 m x 20 m but irregular in shape (Willey 1953: 340). While both Plazas A and B are built with massive walls faced with cyclopean stone, Willey described the walls of Plaza C as ordinary stone masonry of the type seen commonly throughout Virú during all periods. Plazas A and B clearly seem like monumental public spaces while Plaza C is small and basic.

Immediately south of the site there are preserved sections of two separate roads (Willey 1953: fig. 23). An approximately 100 m long section of the one road is well-preserved; this road is 6 m wide and paved with untreated stone. The second road is not well-preserved and based on the differing preservation rates it is likely that this is a newer road replacing an older one. The road to the Moche Valley to the north is said to run from the Virú Valley neck, up the Queneto Quebrada, and through the hills to Moche, and presumably this is a section of this road. It is not clear if this road is associated with the Queneto Temple or simply runs past it.

Dating this site is complicated. Willey (1953: 341) has a good overview of the problems that various researchers—including himself and Ford—have had in dating the site and, to the best of my knowledge, no archaeological work has been conducted at this site since Willey’s study. The Ford-Willey dating scheme, on which I base all site dates in Virú, dated this site to the Late Epoch based on separate collections (one dating to the La Plata or Chimú subperiod and the other to the Estero or Chimú-Inca subperiod of the Late Epoch), although Ford (archives) observed that several of the sherds in these collections, especially the later one, came from burials. The current re-serialization of these collections dates the site to Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.

The site is clearly older than the Middle Virú Period, however. Prior to Willey’s survey, Bennett (1939: 22) described the Queneto Temple and conducted excavations there. In an
excavation in Plaza C at 20 cm depth Bennett (1939: 24) recovered 42 ceramics that he described as “small crude orange vessels” and went on to describe them as “practically toy vessels.” Bennett did not identify these ceramics to type but Willey (1953: 341) argued that these vessels matched small ollas that Larco Hoyle (1948) dated to the Initial Period, the earliest ceramic types in Peru. Other cuts excavated by Bennett (1939: 27) were sterile but he made surface ceramic collections and dated these to Late Virú and the Late Epoch (termed Early and Late Chimú by Bennett). The architecture of the temple, particularly the cyclopean but largely unprepared stone facing walls and monolithic standing stones, speaks to Initial Period and/or Early Horizon styles (Guañape in the Virú chronology), however. Kroeber (1944) noted similarities between Plaza B and Cerro Sechín, an Initial Period ceremonial centre in the Casma Valley to the south, although the Queneto Temple does not have incised motif walls like Cerro Sechín, and incised facing stone is typical of Initial Period and Early Horizon stone facing walls throughout Peru. Thomas Zoubek (1997), who excavated the Initial Period centres of Huacas El Gallo and La Gallina (V-148 and V-149) in the Huacapongo Valley and has done the most work on the Initial Period in Virú, apparently did not consider the Queneto Temple to date to the Initial Period or Guañape Period as he did not mention this site.

Kroeber (1944) was most likely correct when he argued that this site was, in fact, one of the earliest in Virú and was an important ceremonial centre that remained important through later periods of time in Virú. Important, sacred places often have memory and remain important for centuries or millennia after they were built, and the Queneto Temple was almost certainly this. I argue that it was first built in the Initial Period or during the Guañape Period and was reused during all subsequent periods of Virú, which would explain the complicated and seemingly contradictory dates assigned to the site. The Queneto Quebrada on the whole appears to be sacred or ceremonial in nature. Bennett (1939) noted the presence of petroglyphs in the hills farther up the quebrada to the west of the Queneto Temple and other petroglyphs are found on rock outcrops on the south side of the quebrada. When I visited Queneto in 2009 I observed two or three burials beneath rock outcrops in the hills behind the temple, and these were likely buried as mummy bundles. Ford (1949) observed several seemingly irregular geoglyphs, which he termed “Star Roads” on the floor and hillslopes of the Queneto Quebrada, and these features, visible on satellite imagery and from the hills surrounding the quebrada, bear some resemblance to the straight-line geoglyphs found in Nazca and throughout coastal Peru. The entire quebrada appears to have sacred significance, with the Queneto Temple being its ceremonial centre.

V-18
Time period(s): Middle and Late Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.17 ha
Location: 8.3945° S, 78.7416° W
Description: Willey (1953: 115) describes this site as a midden, cemetery, and house site, but I classify it as residential because that is its main function. It is on the sloping side of a very small quebrada opening off of the main valley just down-valley from the Castillo de Tomaval (V-51). Willey describes the main feature of the site as a 14 m x 18 m rectangular stone-walled enclosure divided into five internal rooms. The structure is built on a hill slope and the rooms within it are terraced to account for this slope. A 4 m deep refuse midden is just below this structure; Willey
noted that this area had been heavily looted and that both looter’s pits and a deep erosion channel revealed the depth of the midden area and the presence of graves and conjoined rock and adobe rooms. Willey dated this site to both Early and Middle Virú on the basis of two ceramic collections made here. Willey argued that the structures beneath the midden dated to the earlier occupation. The current seriation dates the site to Middle and Late Virú, however.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey describes this site as being a few hundred metres west of Castillo de Tomaval. The area immediately west of Tomaval has been heavily affected by the construction of a large siphon pipe for the Chavi-Mochic irrigation project and associated service roads. The site may have been mitigated during the construction of this project and is no longer present; without access to archaeological reports associated with the Chavi-Mochic project or without further ground-truthing it is not possible to locate this site. There is an area near the base valley floor that appears to have a terraced group of rooms and a sandy area downslope of this but it is difficult to determine whether this is the correct site or even if it is an archaeological feature at all. I map this area as the site.

**V-20**

Time period(s): Middle Virú  
Type: Civic  
Size: 0.2 ha  
Location: 8.3554° S, 78.7075° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 223) described this as a large rock-walled structure with no internal rooms. There is no clear evidence of the structure having been roofed, and the floors of the structure are the natural stone of the alluvial fan of the quebrada in which it is located. Given its size and lack of internal structures, Willey felt that this was a civic building; I retain this terminology in order to avoid making assumptions about the exact nature of the building, but presumably it had a ceremonial role. This is a standalone building unlike civic-ceremonial centres, although several residential sites are nearby. Willey dated this site to the Late Virú period but in my analysis it dates solely to the Middle Virú period.  
Mapping accuracy: Excellent.

**V-21**

Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch  
Type: Residential  
Size: 7.072 ha  
Location: 8.3518° S, 78.7076° W  
Description: This is a large village or residential site located on the floor and terraced hillslopes of the Tomaval Quebrada on the north side of the Huacapongo Valley. All structures at the site are located uphill from the highest irrigation canal in the quebrada. Although Willey (1953: 75) considered this site to date primarily to the Early Virú period with some houses built in the Late (Tomaval) period, ceramic analysis shows that this site was in continual use from Early Virú through to the Late Epoch. The site’s largest extent (mapped) is assumed to date to the Early and Middle Virú periods.
Mapping accuracy: Excellent. However the cut-off between this site and adjacent sites to the west is arbitrary.

V-22
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.005 ha
Location: 8.3567° S, 78.7101° W
Description: This site is a small, single rock-walled house near the foot of the large Niño Quebrada on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley. Willey estimated the room to 10 m x 10 m but did not measure it (1953: 258). Based on the ceramic data and architectural style Willey considered the structure to date to the Late Epoch but to be built over an Early Virú midden. Reseriation of the ceramic assemblage from this site dates it continuously from Early Virú through the Late Epoch, however.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey did not describe the precise location of the site relative to other sites or landscape features and the description of a square rock-walled house is too vague to associate with any single site. There are several isolated rooms that fit this general description located within a 100 m radius of the point where Willey depicted this site on the master valley site map (error in Willey’s site placement is assumed to be around 100 m but can be more or less), although many of these are smaller than what Willey described for this site. I have mapped the single room structure nearest to this point as the site.

V-23
Time period(s): Early Virú through Colonial Period
Type: Residential
Size: 0.082 ha
Location: 8.3629° S, 78.7025° W
Description: This is a rock-walled compound on the alluvial fan of a quebrada on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley. The site consists of a large rectangular rock-walled structure 27 m x 28 m in extent. This structure is divided into three internal rooms and a corridor between rooms (Willey 1953: 343). It is one of the few Colonial-Period sites in Virú. Ford (archives) identified glass and at least 60 glazed Colonial ceramic wares at the site (ceramics of this period are not included in my seriation analysis in chapter 4). In addition to the Colonial ceramics there was a small assemblage of Prehispanic domestic ware ceramics; based on these Willey (1953: 343) dated an Early Virú component at the site but argued that the structures themselves dated to the Colonial Period because they are very different from any sort of Prehispanic architecture. Willey is certainly correct in this reasoning, but the present re-seriation of the site’s Prehispanic ceramic assemblage demonstrates that the site was in continual use from Early Virú through the Late Epoch and into the Colonial Period. Given the small ceramic assemblage, it is likely that the site was essentially one house or a small group of houses that were continuously occupied.

Mapping accuracy: Good. On older satellite imagery, available through Google Earth, there is a square compound with complex internal divisions that fits Willey’s description of this site’s size
and layout reasonably well (although the imagery is blurry and the layout is difficult to determine clearly), and this is located very near to where Willey located this site on the master valley map of all sites. This foundation appears to have been destroyed more recently by the re-routing of the road that runs to the Huacapongo Pueblo and by modern structures built on and near this location. It is possible that the feature visible on this older imagery is simply the foundation of a razed modern structure as there are several modern structures in the area but given the apparent similarity in layout between this feature and the site as Willey described it, I map this feature.

**V-24**

**Time period(s):** Early and Middle Virú  
**Type:** Residential  
**Size:** 0.208 ha  
**Location:** 8.363° S, 78.7002° W  
**Description:** This is a mid-sized site on the floor of the Niño Quebrada on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley. The site consists of approximately 24 rock-walled rooms plus some isolated structures outside the main one, but a small portion of the site has been destroyed by alluvial action (Willey 1953: 258). Willey considered the structures at the site to date to the Late Epoch (Tomaval) because of architectural similarities with nearby sites that date entirely to that period, but this site also had an Early Virú occupation. My seriation places this as dating only to the Early and Middle Virú periods, however.  
**Mapping accuracy:** Excellent

**V-26**

**Time period(s):** Middle Virú through Late Epoch  
**Type:** Residential  
**Size:** 0.26 ha  
**Location:** 8.3619° S, 78.6994° W  
**Description:** This is a small collection of rock-walled rooms on the floor of the Niño Quebrada consisting of one large room with small storage rooms, and several smaller rooms near the main structure (Willey 1953: 259). Willey dated this site to the Late Epoch (Tomaval) on the basis of an abundance of late sherd material, and also considered there to be a small Early Virú period occupation. However the sherd collection contains an abundance of Castillo and Late sherds with very few HPP sherds which by the present seriation dates to the Middle and Late Virú periods, as well as the Late Epoch. It is not possible to tell which period(s) date the structures.  
**Mapping accuracy:** Excellent

**V-28**

**Time period(s):** Early Virú through Late Epoch  
**Type:** Civic
Size: 0.193 ha  
Location: 8.3622° S, 78.6976° W  
Description: V-28 is a large, open room, roughly rectangular in shape, with rock walls and natural rock floor (Willey 1953: 223-224). In size, form, and context it is quite similar to V-20. It is best interpreted as a civic building used for an unspecified civic and/or ceremonial role, likely serving the many nearby residential sites. Willey dated the site to the Late Virú period with a small Early Virú component, but the present seriation shows this site being in continual use from Early Virú through to the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent

V-29  
Time period(s): Early Virú  
Type: Residential  
Size: 0.055 ha  
Location: 8.3627° S, 78.6983° W  
Description: This is another small rock-walled site on the alluvial outwash plain of the Niño Quebrada. Willey (1953: 259) observed 15 rooms at the site but noted that it has been heavily damaged by post-occupation alluvial action, which can clearly be seen in satellite imagery; in fact it seems that the site has been further damaged since Willey conducted his survey. In addition to the rooms, Willey noted that there was a low stone mound (~11x13 m in size) on the east side of the site that may have been a house platform. This mound would indicate that there may have been some social stratigraphy among the residents of V-29, something not seen at most of the local sites. The sherd material from this site dated the site primarily to the Early Virú period with a very small Late Epoch reoccupation, but Willey felt that the structures themselves dated to the later occupation at the site. In the present seriation I have eliminated the Late Epoch occupation because it is too small and I argue that this site dates primarily to the Early Virú period.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Site can be relocated but exact dimensions are difficult to trace because of heavy flood damage to the site.

V-30  
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú  
Type: Residential  
Size: 0.229 ha  
Location: 8.3613° S, 78.7012° W  
Description: This site consists of approximately 25 to 30 rock-walled rooms on the floor of the Niño Quebrada (Willey 1953: 195). The site was originally somewhat larger, but flooding has destroyed part of it. One larger room at the site is slightly raised and may be a small communal area or the house of a village chief, but this cannot be confirmed at present. The site sits just above the highest irrigation canal along this part of the Huacapongo Valley and just below a large stone wall that crosses the quebrada; it is not clear whether this site is associated with either of
these features, but the stone wall likely dates to the Chimú period. Willey considered the bulk of this site’s architecture to date to the Late Virú period but also considered there to be an Early Virú occupation; my seriation dates this site only to Early and Middle Virú.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent.

**V-31**

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú, Late Epoch

Type: Civic; Residential

Size: 2.06 ha

Location: 8.3598° S, 78.701° W

Description: This site is an irregular collection of rooms on the Niño Quebrada on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley. The site consists of approximately 17-25 rooms including one large room that is 13x15 m, and there is also a large (35x60 m) rock-wall enclosed plaza-like structure that has been partially destroyed by flooding (Willey 1953: 310). The larger rooms and possible plaza indicate that this site may have had a small civic-ceremonial role in addition to the primarily residential occupation; I consider this to be a residential site with community or civic space. Willey dated a small Early Virú component and a much larger Late Epoch (Tomaval) component; the present seriation identifies two components but the earlier one dates to both Early and Middle Virú.

The site is adjacent to V-204; no ceramic collections were made at V-204 but Willey (1953: 78) speculated that it dated to both Early Virú and the Late Epoch (Tomaval) based on the ceramic scatter he observed when surveying the site. Both V-31 and V-204 appear to be of similar architecture and are separated by a temporary drainage that appears to post-date the occupation of the site. For these reasons, I consider these to both be a single site. Willey (1953: Fig. 38) mapped both of these sites, but satellite imagery clearly shows that they are both larger than what Willey had mapped.

Between both sites Willey felt that the majority of buildings dated to the Late Epoch occupation of the sites. Although it is impossible to tell without ground-truthing, based on the aerial imagery it appears as though there are two different architectural styles present at the site: (1) small rooms arranged in a haphazard manner climbing the slope and (2) large rectangular rooms with internal divisions, arranged in a more regular manner than the former. Although it is possible that these two styles of rooms date to different occupations of the site, at present I am only able to draw a map of the site as it currently appears.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Note that Willey (1953: fig. 38) drew separate maps for V-31 and V-204, but both of these sites extend farther to the north than Willey had mapped. Since the sites are only separated by a temporary drainage that appears to post-date the sites I consider them to be a single site; I outline the site with a single polygon, thereby assuming that there were originally additional structures that have since been destroyed by the drainage that separates V-31 and V-204.

**V-32**

Time period(s): Early to Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.079 ha
Location: 8.3609° S, 78.7021° W
Description: This small residential site close to V-30 and V-31 consists of two rock-walled rooms, although other rooms have been destroyed (Willey 1953: 195). Willey dated the site to both Early and Late Virú and felt that the architecture dated to the latter period without elaborating on this. Viewing the aerial imagery, V-32 appears to be separated from V-30 to the east only by a temporary drainage channel, the same one that was discussed separating V-31 from V-204. Both V-30 and V-32 are separated from V-31 and V-204, respectively, to the north by approximately 50 m of terrain, although there may be some architecture between these sites (the aerial imagery is not clear enough to be certain). There is, however, a large wall that crosses the quebrada and runs between V-30/V-32 and V-30/V-204; this wall likely dates to the Late (Chimú) period, although this remains to be tested. Willey may have assigned different names to these sites purely because of this wall. In reality, V30, V-31, V-32, and V-204 were likely all part of the same site and all have similar ceramic profiles (no ceramic collection was made for V-204).

There are numerous other structures scattered around the Niño Quebrada, some of which may be separated from these sites by other post-occupational temporary drainages. Ford and Willey did not survey or collect ceramics from any of these sites (save V-34) and made no mention of them, and without dating data or any on-the-ground description I will not map any of them or include them in my analyses. A scan of the aerial imagery shows several other small, isolated structures (mostly consisting of 1-3 rooms) scattered to the east and north of this cluster of sites. My own difficulty in relocating V-34 when I surveyed this quebrada in 2009 confirms the presence of these isolated structures, many of which are associated with temporary drainage channels and are not simply isolated because structures between these and other sites were washed away, although there are very large relatively recent drainages that almost certainly destroyed many sites. A full aerial and ground-truthed survey of all extant structures in this quebrada would be provide useful data on the nature of occupation in this seemingly densely-populated quebrada floor, almost entirely located on higher ground than the highest visible irrigation canal in the area.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent.

V-33
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 2.201 ha
Location: 8.3591° S, 78.7045° W
Description: This site consists of a series of terraced house platforms built on a steep slope of the hill that divides the Niño and Tomaval Quebradas. There is an irrigation canal at the base of the site that sits approximately 15 m higher than the current level of agricultural fields in this area, and the main bulk of residential terraces rise another 25 m higher than this canal over a run of less than 100 m. It is not clear whether or not this canal is associated with the early occupations; while the canal was not in use in 2010 it had clearly been recently maintained and there were
well-maintained agricultural terraces below it (also not in use in 2010). Some of these agricultural terraces appear to have incorporated residential terraces, presumably dating to the main occupation of this site, but the bulk of the site lies above this canal. Willey (1953: 75) only briefly describes this site but does not describe its extent so it is difficult to gauge just how large Willey considered the site to be, or which part of it he surveyed. There are three clusters of narrow residential terraces stretching along the hillside; without additional survey it is hard to be certain that these are all contemporary but given their considerable similarity in both form and location, proximity to each other, and the presence of several footpaths between them, I consider all three clusters to be the same site. Site V-205, a fortified site that is partially contemporary with V-33, lies at the crest of this hill immediately above V-33 and is surely associated with the site, likely as a retreat and community gathering space (see description below). There are also scattered small structures that cannot be clearly associated with either of these sites, and these are not included.

Rooms and terraces at the site are small and range from 1.5 m x 2 m to 3 m x 3 m (Willey 1953: 75). The site contains abundant domestic refuse including ceramics, ground stone, and chipped lithics, and cannot be considered a fortification although it is built in a defendable location (during my survey of the site on November 11, 2010, I found a perfectly spherical river cobble that was clearly not a grinding stone and was also clearly very different from the jagged stone that makes up the hillside. This stone had two notches partially drilled into it on opposite sides of the baseball-sized stone. I had the impression that this was a bola stone or slingstone, indicating some level of violence at the site). The site has good views of the entire lower Huacapongo Valley and the upper part of the valley neck and the confluence of the Huacapongo and Virú Rivers (the Virú River is also called the Carabamba River upstream of the confluence).

There is no civic space that can be identified at the site but there is at V-205, immediately uphill, and the latter site was likely the fortified and civic space associated with V-33. Dating V-33 and understanding its artifact remains is complicated by the presence of intrusive burials at the site, and residential occupations at the site may have continued for a long time. Willey dated the structures to Early Virú and the burials to Late Virú, but the present seriation shows continual use from Early Virú through the Late Epoch. During my survey I found two interesting artifacts, a spindle whorl and a fragmentary worked bone pointed tool, but these appeared to have been associated with the backdirt from looter’s pits, and thus were possibly from intrusive burials. Nevertheless, I argue that the site was used as both a residential and burial space in later periods, but it was primarily built and used as a residential site during the Early and Middle Virú periods.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Ford (archives) described the location of this site better than Willey, but neither mapped the site or described its layout or extent in any detail. I am confident, however, that I have relocated the correct site and this site can be clearly seen on satellite imagery. As described above, I map three separate clusters of residential terraces and consider these all part of the same site, but it is likely that Ford and Willey only surveyed the easternmost cluster which is the largest and best-preserved.

V-34
Time period(s): Middle and Late Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.051 ha
Location: 8.3601° S, 78.6971° W
Description: Willey only very briefly described this site as one of several similar isolated house structures on the plains of the Niño Quebrada (1953: 112). The two rooms measure 14.5 m x 9.5 m, and 8 m x 6.5 m, with the smaller room attached to the side of the larger one.

Mapping accuracy: Low. Willey did not map this site specifically and only showed its general location on the valley master map. In 2009 I attempted to relocate and survey this site but found that there were many similar two-room structures (and some with up to five rooms) in this quebrada in the approximate vicinity where Willey mapped the site. No sites match with Willey’s description of both the size and arrangement of rooms, so I have mapped the largest, most obvious site in the vicinity (on the assumption that Willey chose to survey this site because of its size), which fits the approximate size description for V-34 but has 3-4 small “outbuildings” on the northwest corner of the larger room. It is possible that the site Willey described has been washed away by subsequent El Niño flooding, but this is unlikely since other sites in this quebrada appear to be quite similar to what Willey had mapped 70 years ago.

V-35
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.021 ha
Location: 8.3641° S, 78.6955° W
Description: Willey (1953: 245) describes this site as a series of terraced irrigation plots extending to the east from a structure consisting of two extant and one partially-demolished room (the extant rooms are 8x9 m and 8x11 m). There is a wall running southwest-northeast and connecting to the southeast corner of the structure; Willey hypothesizes that this wall connected to the irrigation terraces, but the connection has been destroyed by flooding. Willey (1953: 366) dates the terraces and canals in this quebrada to the Late Epoch (Tomaval) or possible to Late Virú, although he does not make his evidence for these dates clear. For my purposes I only map the house structure itself as it contains evidence of a Middle Virú occupation; regardless of the period that dates the irrigation terraces, I am not mapping actual agricultural fields in this project.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey included the westernmost part of this site (the house structure itself) on a larger map of the quebrada (Willey 1953: fig. 51). The house structure and adjacent wall of V-35 are only vaguely visible on available aerial images but nearby sites appear clearly and the location of V-35 can therefore be determined with good precision. However the agricultural terraces that Willey describes—but did not map—do not appear on aerial imagery. This area is currently in cultivation but likely was not when Willey was conducting his survey, and the modern agricultural fields obscure the terraces that Willey describes.

V-38
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Midden
Size: 0.227 ha
Location: 8.4614° S, 78.8057° W
Description: Willey (1953: 120) very briefly describes this site as being a midden attached to the major Late Virú site of Castillo de Huancaco, but dating purely to the Middle Virú period. The present seriation agrees with this purely Middle Virú date. Willey describes the midden as being located to the immediate northwest of the Castillo but his own map of the Castillo (1953: fig. 44) clearly shows V-38 being located to the southwest; I trust Willey’s map over his written description.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey’s map of the Castillo de Huancaco (1953: fig. 44) shows V-38 as being rectangular and surrounded by walls on three sides, with the slope of the Compositan hills forming the southeast side of the slope. These appear clearly on aerial imagery. However Willey describes this as a midden (rather than a walled structure) and the site is on the edge of his map; it is not clear where Willey drew the line between this site and Castillo de Huancaco proper, nor is it clear whether or not this site extends beyond the walls Willey mapped. To be conservative I map only the rectangular enclosure that Willey clearly labelled as V-38.

**V-40, V-41, V-42**

Time period(s): Middle Virú (V-42 also has Late Virú and Late Epoch occupations)
Type: Residential
Size: 0.526 ha
Location: 8.3718° S, 78.7394° W

Description: These three sites are adjacent to each other on the Queneto Quebrada with destroyed or partially-destroyed structures between them. Given their proximity to one another and similar dates I find it appropriate to consider these as a single site, although Willey (1953: 112, 188-189) described them separately. The house group has been partially destroyed by various temporary drainages but it is not clear from aerial imagery whether these pre- or post-date the occupation period(s) of the structures; likely some pre-date the structures and others post-date them and have destroyed buildings. There are additional structures within the confines of this house group that Willey does not map; these are included in the current map of the site.

There are also numerous small isolated structures of a similar size and shape to these three sites located farther up the quebrada to the north and west of these sites; undoubtedly many of these date to the same time period as this house group but these cannot be included in this analysis without surface ceramic data from those structures specifically.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Note that Willey (1953: fig. 22) only maps the best-preserved structures within this house group although aerial imagery shows other partially-destroyed structures located within the group. In order to maintain continuity in the GIS database I map each site (including partially-destroyed structures) as a separate polygon but place them adjacent to each other.

**V-43**

Time period(s): Middle and Late Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.02 ha
Location: 8.3729° S, 78.7391° W
Description: This is an isolated two-room structure in the Queneto Quebrada (Willey 1953: 113). It is approximately 100 m south of the V-40, V-41, and V-42 group and is of a similar date to those structures, but this site is isolated enough to be mapped and described separately. The better-preserved of two rooms at V-43 is 11x7.5 m and a banquette runs on the interior of all four walls. There is a doorway and two small closet-like rooms in the room. V-43 is separated from the V-40 house group by a partially-demolished wall and V-43 is immediately adjacent to a Prehispanic road, but the age of these structures is not known and Willey is not sure if V-43 is associated with that road (see Willey 1953: fig. 22).

Mapping accuracy: Excellent.

**V-49**

Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.223 ha
Location: 8.3744° S, 78.7389° W

Description: This site consists of several conjoined and some isolated rooms in an irregular pattern. It was originally larger, but has been partially destroyed by flooding; Willey observed nine in-tact rooms at the site (Willey 1953: 246). V-49 is located just above (northwest of) a major irrigation canal (feeding a grid-like pattern of fields that likely date later than Middle Virú) and road, and below (southeast of) another road. Willey notes that these landscape features are Prehispanic, but he does not date these features or discuss whether or not this site is associated with them; the close association of V-49 with the features just below the site do suggest that the site is related to them, but it is not clear whether these features existed for the entire occupation of V-49 or only for its latter period(s), after the period of concern to the current study.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 22) depicted this site on a map of all sites in the area so it can be relocated and mapped accurately. There are considerably more structures in this area than what appear on Willey’s map, however, and structures in this area show clearly on satellite imagery. Some of these are clearly much older than V-49 (based on architecture and level of preservation, as these appear on satellite imagery) but without ceramic collections from those areas I am hesitant to date or map them. I map only the buildings that Willey depicted as belonging to V-49 and do not include adjacent or nearby structures that he did not document.

**V-51 (Castillo de Tomaval)**

Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Castillo Fortification Complex
Size: 5.016 ha
Location: 8.3911° S, 78.7385° W

Description: This is the best-known and most prominent Castillo Fortification Complex. The nature and placement of the castillos are well-described throughout chapters 5 and 6 and it is not necessary to describe them here in great detail. Strong and Evans (1952) excavated two deep (>6 m) stratigraphic cuts at this site and dated the site securely to the Middle Virú Period. Ford (1949) did not make a surface collection here and I use and agree with Strong and Evans’ date
for the site, although Willey (1953: 161) notes the presence of Middle Virú, Late Virú, and Late Epoch burials at the site. The Castillo de Tomaval itself is a large and prominent adobe and stone structure that sits on top of a rock outcrop on the north margin of the valley at the valley neck. This location provides it both a striking prominence and a commanding view of the valley from its summit. Willey notes that a stone perimeter wall encloses the castillo mid-way down the slope upon which the complex is built. The main castillo building has three terraces, the highest of which rises as high as 50 m above the valley floor. Numerous rock walls are associated with the structure and an out-of-use canal, undated but presumably one of the main Prehispanic canals, runs through the hills and past the base of the castillo.

Attached to the castillo itself is a large residential town situated at a lower elevation than the actual castillo, but still on top of a difficult-to-access hill spur. Strong and Evans (1952) excavated two deep stratigraphic cuts (to 6.75 m and 6.25 m depth), three smaller trenches in isolated rooms at the site, three burials, and two test pits. These yielded a large sample of artifacts and considerable information on the architecture and the nature of occupation at the site. Rather than repeating these here, their volume should be consulted for a discussion of this occupation. It is clear that the Castillo de Tomaval had a large residential occupation, similar to Huaca Santa Clara (V-67) and the Sarraque complex (V-72, V-73, V-74, and V-75), and unlike the Castillos de San Juan (V-16/V-62), Napo (V-68), and Virú Viejo (V-231). Castillo de Tomaval should be considered a true town, and likely a significant place in the Middle Virú political landscape.

Strong and Evans (1952) found evidence of Early Virú occupations in the very deepest levels of this site and also found evidence of Late Virú and Late Epoch occupations. However it was clear from their excavations that the primary occupation and construction of the Castillo and associated town dated to the Middle Virú Period based on large quantities of Virú Negativo, Carmelo Negativo, and Callejon sherds, the three corporate wares diagnostic of this period. These corporate wares are very rare outside of the Castillo de Tomaval and a few other major sites. Ford (1949) did not make a surface collection here. Willey (1952: 165), dating the site himself based on Strong and Evans’ evidence, also considered it to have had a very minor Early Virú occupation but to primarily date to the Middle Virú Period. I generally agree with these conclusions, but see any Early and Late Virú occupation as being very minor and essentially trace occupations. The ceramics from the uppermost and lowermost levels of Strong and Evans’ trenches are not typical of true Early or Late Virú occupation and may rather document a presence throughout the entire Middle Virú Period. It is clear that the primary occupation and construction of the site is Middle Virú and I have chosen to date the site solely to this period.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The exact limits of the site do not show well on satellite imagery and are difficult to determine, but the main structure has been partially restored and shows prominently on satellite imagery. Strong and Evans (1952: fig. 17) and Willey (1953: fig. 32) map this site clearly.

Gallinazo Group
Time period(s): Middle Virú. Some sites have Late Virú and Late Epoch occupations
Type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic-Ceremonial Centre:</th>
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<td>- V-59 (Huaca Gallinazo)</td>
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Residential:

Size (all mounds): 17.539 ha

Location: 8.4386° S, 78.8817° W

Description: The Gallinazo Group is the largest and most complex archaeological site in the Virú Valley. Indeed it is a true city (Millaire 2010a, 2010b; Millaire and Eastaugh 2011). This site has been investigated by several researchers, most recently as part of a major mapping and excavation project by Millaire (2009a, 2010a, 2010b; Millaire and Eastaugh 2011, 2014). Prior to this, Fogel (1993) surveyed this site. Bennett (1939, 1950) was the first to describe and excavate this site comprehensively and Strong and Evans (1952) excavated a deep stratigraphic trench at the site. Ford (1949) did not make surface ceramic collections on any of the mounds of this site because Bennett’s (1950) excavations as part of the same project were seen as a more-reliable way to date these mounds. These sources all describe this site in greater detail than I can here and I discuss the significance of the Gallinazo Group as part of chapters 5 and 6.

It is unnecessary to describe this site in detail here, but I would like to describe how I classified it. The Gallinazo Group is made up of several discrete mounds and Bennett (1939) classified each of these as a separate site. These classifications were maintained by Bennett (1950)—though updated to match the site naming scheme of the Virú Valley Project—and in Willey’s (1953) summary of the valley’s settlement patterns, although they were recognized as being interrelated. The tallest and most extensive sector of the site is known as Huaca Gallinazo (V-59) and consists of a 25 m tall pyramid, a plaza, several smaller mounds, and large residential sectors (Millaire and Eastaugh 2011, 2014). There are five other discrete civic-ceremonial complexes as well as at least fourteen smaller residential mounds. Fogel (1993) hypothesized that all of these mounds were just the highest promontories of a massive site and that the space between them, largely farmland today, was overburden burying other sectors of the site. A comprehensive remote sensing survey by Millaire and Eastaugh (2011) showed that this is not the case and that the various mounds of the site were discrete during their Middle Virú occupation, but that all of the mounds operated together as a single city. For this reason I classify the Gallinazo Group as one large site.

Bennett (1939, 1950) and Strong and Evans (1952) dated all sites of the Gallinazo Group to the Middle Virú Period, but some mounds had continued occupation in the Late Virú Period and during the Late Epoch. Strong and Evans (1952) found evidence of an Early Virú occupation in the very deepest levels of their stratigraphic cut at Huaca Gallinazo but I have chosen to not classify this site as having an early occupation because it is clear that most of the site was built during the Middle Virú Period. Millaire (2009, 2010a, 2010b) has demonstrated that Huaca Gallinazo was the administrative seat of the Middle Virú polity and that it was abandoned by the elite at the end of the Middle Virú Period. Residential occupation continued through the Late
Virú Period but populations were likely significantly reduced and the site did not enjoy the same prominence. It is likely that minor residential occupations continued at Huaca Gallinazo and other mounds of the site through the Late Virú Period and Late Epoch—and indeed continue to today—but the primary occupation of all mounds dates solely to the Middle Virú Period.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Bennett (1939, 1950) outlined all of the mounds of the site and these can be georeferenced to satellite imagery such that each mound can be clearly identified by its original site number. Millaire (2010a; Millaire and Eastaugh 2011, 2014) has also mapped the entire site using high-precision differential GPS. These data can be brought into the present GIS in order to accurately map each mound of this large site.

**V-63**

**Time period(s):** Middle Virú  
**Type:** Residential  
**Size:** 1.214 ha  
**Location:** 8.3652° S, 78.732° W

**Description:** This site is located on the eastern slope of the San Juan Hill, just below the Castillos de San Juan (V-16 and V-62). It is just south of a small quebrada that has two or three similar small residential sites in it, with more stretching along the base of the hills to the north along the valley margins, but these other sites were not documented or surveyed by Willey and therefore cannot be dated or included in this analysis. The site is clearly domestic; Willey (1953: 113, fig. 23) described a series of rooms spread over approximately 60 m of the hill and interpreted these primarily as house groups but when I surveyed the site on October 13, 2010, I noted a spread of domestic refuse extending for some 200 m. Ford collected nearly 1200 domestic ware ceramic sherds from this site and during my survey in 2010 I observed a large amount of domestic ware ceramics on the site’s surface along with a large amount of chipped lithic material, several grinding stones, a ground stone adze, a ground stone knife, and a llama corral. Rooms at the site are built on terraces, owing to the slope of the hill, and are built as three groups of terraced rooms, although there are also some isolated structures (Willey 1953: 113). Willey described the average room size as being 4 m x 5 m with some as large as 7 m x 7 m, and he noted that every group of rooms had some small storage rooms attached. One group contained two larger rooms of 10 m x 18 m and likely was larger but parts of the group are poorly-preserved. Willey noted deep accumulations of domestic refuse near this house group.

Willey dated the site to the Middle Virú Period based on Ford’s seriation of the large ceramic assemblage and the current seriation agrees with this date. During my survey in 2010 I observed one sherd of Carmelo Negative corporate ware, diagnostic of the Middle Virú Period but rare in the valley, as well as one sherd of Moche/Huancaco style, diagnostic to Late Virú. The castillos uphill from the site have abundant ceramic and lithic deposits and also intrusive burials and it is likely that some of these artifacts have washed downhill to this site or were tossed over the hill by occupants of that site, but the date and overall nature of V-63 is secure. It is not clear how this site is associated with the Castillos de San Juan (V-16 and V-62) at the top of the hill but the sites are contemporary and the occupants of V-63 were almost certainly involved in the activities that took place at the Castillos. V-63 is clearly residential and is located at the base of the hill near the fields and irrigation canals—and with general agricultural tools recovered from
the site—so it is likely a residential and agricultural sector of the larger Castillo de San Juan complex. Nevertheless I map it separately.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 23) depicted this site on the map of the Castillos de San Juan. During my own survey in 2010 I noted that the site was larger than what Willey described, however, and took several GPS waypoints from various parts of the site outside of what Willey mapped. These additional areas are not clearly visible on satellite imagery, although the main area is. I use these GPS waypoints as the basis for my map of this site. This makes the site approximately three times as large as Willey described it.

**V-64A and V-64B**

**Time period(s):**
V-64A: Middle Virú through Late Epoch
V-64B: Early and Middle Virú

**Type:** Midden; Funerary

**Size:**

V-64A: 7.131 ha
V-64B: 2.995 ha

**Location:** 8.3652° S, 78.732° W (V-64A); 8.4178° S, 78.7333° W (V-64B)

**Description:** Willey (1953: 231) describes V-64 as a single large midden extending for one kilometre along a sandy ridge on the south margin of the valley, just beyond the extent of cultivation in the 1940s (the area is currently cultivated but these fields are only a few years old, as can be seen in Google Earth historical imagery of the area which shows that it was still natural dune desert as late as July 2011). Willey also identified a looted cemetery at one end of the midden; Ford’s field notes indicate that this was the southwest end of the site, and aerial imagery in this area shows extensive looting, typical of cemeteries in the valley (Contreras 2010; note that looting has also taken place in other parts of the site). There are the remains of some adobe structures in this area, likely tomb linings, but otherwise the site has no visible architecture. Willey identified the cemetery as dating to the Late Virú period and the midden itself dating to the Early Virú period and to the Late Epoch (Tomaval). The present seriation indicates continual use from the Early Virú period through to the Late Epoch.

Willey and Ford (1949; Ford 1949; see also Ford’s field note archive) made three collections at this site. Determining which collection came from which part of the site—and thus determining where the cemetery area is located—is difficult because Willey’s description is vague and Ford apparently made direction errors in his field notes. Collections A and C have a very similar distribution to each other in both their domestic and corporate wares while collection B has a considerably higher percentage of Huacapongo Polished Plain (see Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2). Furthermore, collection B has only two sherds of Huancaco Decorated (Late Virú burial ware) and no Late Epoch corporate wares, whereas collections A and C both have relatively large quantities of Late Epoch corporate ceramics. This suggests that collections A and C were both collected in the same area, and collection C can be definitively traced to the southwest end of the site. Collection B, therefore, was apparently collected from the northeast end of the site. Ford produced a very rudimentary sketch map of the site showing where collections A and B were taken, and my interpretation goes against this sketch map, but this map includes obvious errors.
Given the placement of the three separate collections, it is likely that the northeast part of the site dates primarily to the Early and Middle Virú periods, whereas the southwest part of the site dates primarily to the Late Virú period and Late Epoch. One Callejon-style corporate ware, diagnostic of the Middle Virú period, was recovered from the cemetery area of the site, however, indicating that there was at least some Middle Virú occupation of the entire site.

My normal practice is to follow Willey closely in assigning site numbers and mapping sites but Willey’s description of V-64 includes large tracts of unoccupied land. In a similar situation on the sandy north margin of the valley, Willey split continuous midden-cemeteries into several unique sites but at V-64 he lumped them together into one, creating a site that appears to be categorically larger than any other site but in reality is similar to other midden-cemeteries on the valley margins. Satellite imagery shows two clearly-defined areas of looting activity that correspond to the two areas indicated by Ford as being the locations of collections A and B (collection C, as discussed above, likely came from the same location as collection A), and for these reasons I split the site into two separate sites, V-64A and V-64B. V-64A dates from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch and V-64B dates to Early and Middle Virú.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Midden sites without architecture on the desert margins of the valley are difficult to relocate and map, and Willey never drew a map of this site. Although Ford’s sketch map contains obvious errors it provides valuable clues as to the exact location of these two sites, and between that, visible areas of looting activity, and Willey’s descriptions I am able to map them with confidence, although the precise boundaries of each cannot be determined.

V-65
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Midden
Size: 1.689 ha
Location: 8.4115° S, 78.7235° W
Description: Willey (1953: 278) very briefly describes this site as being a midden approximately 100x200 m in extent, marked by sherds, shell, and rock fragments. It is located on the sandy south margin of the valley, beyond the 1940s limits of cultivation. Although Willey dates the site solely to the Late Epoch (Tomaval), there is evidence of continual use from the Middle Virú period through to the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. The approximate location of this site can be determined by observing landscape features on Willey’s master map of the Virú Valley (1953: Fig. 2). This location places the site in an area that has been heavily affected by the Chávi-Mochic irrigation project hydro station and associated buildings; presumably the site was destroyed to build these buildings. An ellipse with a length of 200 m and a width of 100 m in the approximate location of V-65 takes the place of a proper site map.

V-66 (Puerto Morin Site)
Time period(s): Early Virú
Type: Midden; Funerary
Size: 6.383 ha
Location: 8.4103° S, 78.8868° W

Description: This large midden is the Puerto Morin (Early Virú, in my terminology) type site. Strong and Evans (1952) excavated several burials from here and, based on those and on a surface ceramic collection, Willey (1953: 69-70) dates this site to Early Virú and to the Late Epoch (Tomaval), although it may have first been occupied during the Guanape Period. Re-serialization based on the surface collection places this site in the Early Virú Period. While the site primarily consists of burials and pulverized shell midden refuse, Strong and Evans (1952) excavated a single adobe-walled building with several rooms, which they dated to the Early Virú Period. Strong and Evans’ description of the site and its burials should be consulted for a more in-depth discussion of this site. For my purposes I consider it to be a midden and activity area. While Willey located it a short way back from the modern beach, it was likely on the shore when it was occupied and was an activity area for the fishing community that lived near the modern village of Puerto Morin.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. The midden itself is not visible on satellite imagery. Willey (1953: 70) only describes the site as being several hundred metres in size, and although Strong and Evans (1952) excavated here they did not draw any maps of the site. I have drawn a circle with a diameter of 300 m over the waypoint as it appears on Willey’s master map in order to account for the approximate size and position of this site.

V-67 (Huaca Santa Clara)

Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Castillo Fortification Complex
Size: 2.05 ha
Location: 8.4161° S, 78.7457° W

Description: Willey (1953: 225-226) considered this to be one of the most significant sites in the Virú Valley. He considered its location atop an isolated pyramid-shaped hill in the middle of the valley—just outside of Virú Pueblo—to be an ideal location from which to command over the middle valley. The hill rises sharply to a height of 60 m above the surrounding fields and is topped by a pyramid mound and many structures, typical of the Castillo Fortification Complexes, which are recognized as military installations, towns, and administrative centres (see chapter 6). Its central location and prominence affords the site a commanding view of the entire middle Virú Valley and it would be impossible to pass through the valley without seeing and being seen by this site. Willey dated this site to the Late Virú Period alone based on Ford’s (1949) ceramic surface collection, but also cited it as evidence that the Moche had conquered the valley at the end of the Middle Virú Period as they expanded south from their heartland in the Moche Valley.

Although the site was known to earlier archaeologists and Willey recognized the utility of excavations at it, the site was not excavated by Virú Valley Project members. Millaire (2004, 2009b, 2010b) conducted extensive excavations at the site and found that it served as a regional administrative town during the Middle Virú Period, with close ties to the Gallinazo Group. Moreover, Millaire refuted Willey’s (1953) hypothesis that the Moche had violently conquered Huaca Santa Clara and the Virú Valley based on his excavations here. Instead, Millaire found that the town continued to serve as a major castillo and administrative centre while the Middle Virú elite abandoned the Gallinazo Group and moved to Huancaco (V-88/V-89) and began to make Huancaco Decorated ceramics, signalling the Late Virú Period. It is not necessary to go into great
detail here regarding this site but it is clear from Millaire’s work that Huaca Santa Clara was one of the most significant sites of the Middle Virú Period and that it functioned as one of the six castillo fortification complexes, described in chapter 6.

Based on a re-seriation of Ford’s (1949) ceramic collection and on Millaire’s (2004) research at the site, I date it from Middle Virú through to the Late Epoch. The Late Epoch occupation is likely a small superficial reoccupation and the site was at its greatest eminence during the Middle Virú Period.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The hill that Huaca Santa Clara sits on is well known and highly visible on satellite imagery. An accurate map outlining the site was drawn from spatial data provided by Millaire (personal communication, 2012).

V-68 (Castillo de Napo)
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Castillo Fortification Complex
Size: 0.307 ha
Location: 8.3941° S, 78.7201° W

Description: This is the smallest of the Castillo Fortification Complexes but it is nevertheless an impressive structure. The site is built on the crest of a steep-sided and jagged isolated hill that stands on the edge of the sandy south margin of the valley in the valley neck, opposite Castillo Tomaval on the north margin. Willey (1953: 165) estimates that the hill rises 35 m above the surrounding ground. Similar to the Tomaval and San Juan castillos, Willey observed that a perimeter wall surrounded the top of the hill and enclosed an area of approximately 50 m x 75 m. Another 40 m long wall ran to another wall that apparently enclosed a smaller spur of the hill, although this was less well-preserved during Willey’s survey. The highest prominence of the hill is capped by a small tiered pyramid mound with a zigzagging path on its west side that leads to its summit platform; Willey considered this to be the main entrance to the platform and to the site. Willey describes a number of prepared platforms and natural terraces of varying size, all enclosed within the perimeter wall. While this is the smallest of the castillos, its features, hilltop setting, and architectural style are all similar to the other castillos and it is likely that this site was contemporaneous with them and was built by the Middle Virú polity. Willey dated the site to the Middle Virú Period and the present seriation also dates the site to this period alone. A single diagnostic sherd of Virú Negative encountered in a survey of this site on October 20, 2010 supports this.

During my survey I encountered some domestic refuse on the platforms atop the mound; it is likely that these date to the original occupation of the site but this could not be confirmed. While there was a small residential area, the summit of the site primarily consisted of main pyramid mound—impressive in its location but with a small summit platform—and several small natural and prepared terraces. This suggests that the site did not house a large population but it may have housed a small garrison, or been a place where residents of nearby sites could have fled if necessary. I find this castillo to be most similar to Castillo San Juan in that neither appeared to have been built for a large population but rather served as impressive structures that imposed power primarily through their impressive appearance. Nevertheless, this castillo is well-situated to observe the southern margin of the valley and is intervisible with all other castillos, but it is also in a direct line with a pass in the Sarraque Hills that would allow people to move
from the Huacapongo Valley to the main valley while bypassing most of the castillos. Thus Castillo de Napo may have been situated as a watchtower to ensure that this did not happen, or to ensure that anyone moving through this pass was aware that they could be seen. 

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The castillo and the hill on which it sits are quite prominent on satellite imagery. Willey’s (1953: fig. 33) map of the site also allows for accurate mapping of it.

V-69
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Midden
Size: 0.813 ha
Location: 8.3905° S, 78.717° W
Description: Willey (1953: 278) has very little to say about this small (~75 m diameter) midden. It is located on two hills on the southern margin of the valley. There are no visible structures. Willey dated it to the Late Epoch (Tomaval) but it has evidence of occupation dating to the earlier Middle and Late Virú periods as well.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Because this is a midden located on the valley margin it is difficult to identify from aerial imagery. There are several small hills in the area where Willey described the site and two of these have extensive evidence of looting activity—and are therefore archaeological sites—but these areas are all much larger than the 75 m diameter that Willey described for this site and Willey only documented a single site here so it is not possible to determine the location of this site by reference to others. I have drawn a polygon over the point where Willey located this site on the master valley map. This is somewhat larger than the dimensions that Willey described but I have not included the much larger area of looting just west of this area, which would triple the overall site size.

V-70
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Midden; Funerary
Size: 0.221 ha
Location: 8.3786° S, 78.7153° W
Description: Willey (1953: 79, 294) barely describes this site, simply noting that it is an Early Virú midden that was later re-used as a Late Epoch (Tomaval) cemetery. Other than describing it as being at the foot of the Sarraque Hills, Willey gives no description of the precise location or overall size of the midden, but does note that the later graves come from an area approximately 30x75 m in extent near a spur of the hill. The present seriation indicates that the site did not have an Early Virú occupation but rather was occupied in the Middle and Late Virú periods and during the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Good. The area where Willey depicted this site is a sandy hillslope with extensive pockmarking visible on satellite imagery, indicating looting activity and typical of cemeteries. Most of this pockmarking is unusual, however, and appears natural. There is an area among this pockmarking that is clearly a looted cemetery, however, and the dimensions of this
area roughly fit what Willey described for this site. I am reasonably confident that this is the correct area and have mapped it as the site.

V-72 (Sarraque)
Time period(s): Early Virú and Middle Virú
Type: Fortification; Residential
Size: 0.362 ha
Location: 8.3689° S, 78.7169° W
Description: This is a natural but prepared terrace that runs along the summit of the Sarraque Hills at their highest point, approximately 170 m above the surrounding fields (Willey 1953: 98-99). Willey notes that it was used in several periods but he dates its primary occupation to the Early Virú Period. Based on my re-serialization of ceramic data, I concur that the site was first occupied in the Early Virú Period and that this was its principle occupation. The site was incorporated into the larger Castillo de Sarraque (see below) on the summit of the hill immediately east of this platform, but no major structures were built here at that time. Still, the Middle Virú date attests to fairly significant use in this later period. For this reason I consider this to be a standalone site during the Early Virú Period but consider it to be part of the large castillo fortification complex of the Middle Virú Period.

Willey (1953: 99) considered this site to be similar to V-137 in that it is a prepared platform that likely served as a defensive retreat for nearby residents during the Early Virú Period. Willey also felt that this site had a small residential population, but this site is high above the fields and difficult to access, so I suggest that any residential material here is from occasional occupations during times of duress. There are residential sites on the lower slopes of the hill below this site (including V-75 and V-76 on the south side, which date to the Middle Virú Period, and an unregistered and undated site on the north side of the hill) and it is possible that V-72 served as a defensive platform for residents of these sites. Willey observed possible traces of one structure but this site was primarily a natural terrace that had been cleared of stone but otherwise not built upon.

V-72 has an impressive setting in that it is on the western edge of the Sarraque Hill and thus has a commanding view of the Huacapongo Valley, upper Virú Valley, Virú Valley neck, and middle Virú Valley. The implications of this will be discussed below for V-73 and V-74.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 34) depicts this site on one of two maps for the Castillo de Sarraque and it is clearly visible on satellite imagery.

V-73, V-74, V-75, V-76 (Castillos de Sarraque, Palacio de Sarraque, and Sarraque House Group)
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Castillo Fortification Complex
Size (all sectors): 7.233 ha
Location: 8.3696° S, 78.7154° W
Description: This is one of the largest and most complex sites in the Virú Valley and it is the largest of the six castillo complexes. It includes the castillo structures themselves (V-73 and V-
which are spread along the summit of the Sarraque Hills, the earlier prepared hilltop platform (V-72) adjacent to these, the Palacio de Sarraque (V-75)—a large adobe structure with associated residential terraces—at the base of the hill on the south side, and the Sarraque House Group (V-76), a number of residential terraces near the Palacio on the south side of the hill. Other undocumented and undated residential terraces can be seen on the north side of the hill but it is not clear if these are associated with the Castillo Fortification Complex or if they are unrelated earlier, later, or contemporary structures. This site is very heavily looted and it is advisable that a full research project documents it and conducts excavations while still possible.

Wille (1953: 168-169) considered V-72, V-73, V-74, and V-75 to be all part of the complex but I include V-76 because it is contemporary with the other structures and appears to be an extension of the large residential town associated with the site (Wille 1953: 114). Willey describes this site extensively and produced detailed maps both for the summit sector of the site (fig. 34) and the palacio and residential sector at the base of the hill (fig. 35) and his original should be consulted for a full description of this site. My intention here is to describe the setting of the site and its similarities to the other castillos.

The Sarraque Hills are a long range that run east-west and form the southern side of the Huacapongo Valley and, at their western end, separate the Huacapongo from the Virú Valley. This affords the summit a long ridge that contains much space and sits up to 170 m higher than the surrounding fields; V-72, V-73, and V-74 take advantage of this setting and afford this castillo more space on the hill's summit than do the other castillos. This setting also affords the castillo a commanding view of the Huacapongo Valley, upper Virú Valley, Virú Valley neck, and middle Virú Valley; this is the only one of the six castillos that can see and can be seen from the Huacapongo and upper Virú valleys. Thus the Castillo de Sarraque can be considered the first line of defense or the first clear sign of Middle Virú political power to anyone coming into the valley from the mountains to the east. The castillo consists of three adobe platform mounds and several hillcrest structures and platforms. As with the other castillos, these took advantage of the natural terrain to appear much larger and more impressive than they would on flatter ground, and they appear to have been built with monumentality in mind. Still, these structures and the surrounding platforms also likely served to hold a relatively large military garrison and/or serve as places of refuge for valley residents. These platforms had restricted access and also served to restrict access to the hill summit, suggesting a clear military function for this structure in addition to its impressive monumentality.

Wille (1953: 173) considered the Palacio de Sarraque (V-75) at the base of the hill below V-73 and V-74 to be a part of this site. This sector of the site consists of a large adobe structure—dubbed a palace but which Willey thought was likely a temple—and a smaller structure adobe structure to the east, cut off from the first by a drainage ditch. Willey noted that it resembled both Huancaco (V-88/V-89) and Huaca de la Luna (in the Moche Valley) in both setting and architectural style. Willey describes and maps the size and layout of these structures and it is not necessary to repeat these descriptions here. Wille (1953: 174) also observed that a major Prehispanic canal ran at the base of the adobe structures; if this canal is contemporary with the structure it would lend support to the argument that the Castillo Fortification Complexes of the Virú Valley neck served, at least in part, to protect irrigation canals (see chapter 6). While the hilltop sector of Sarraque offers a commanding view of both the Huacapongo and Virú Valleys, the Palacio sector overlooks the middle Virú Valley and is fully intervisible with all of the other castillos and is a prominent structure when viewed from these other sites or from the valley floor.
In addition to these two structures, Willey (1953: 114; 174) observed extensive but poorly-preserved house terraces surrounding and running up the hill from the Palacio de Sarraque. One section of terraces (V-76) lies just east of and across a hill spur from the Palacio de Sarraque structure; Willey considered this a separate site but based on its location and similarity to the house terraces surrounding the Palacio structure, I consider this to also be part of the Castillo de Sarraque complex. These structures climb the hill towards the V-72, V-73, and V-74 sectors of the site and are clearly associated with them; for these reasons, I consider the entire complex to be a single site consisting of the hilltop castillo proper, a large temple complex, and extensive residential terraces. This means that Sarraque is one of the largest, most interesting, and most complex settlements in the Virú Valley and was likely a centre for pilgrimage, ritual, defense, and administration, as well as housing a large population. This site warrants further research. Unfortunately, it is very heavily looted resulting in extensive damage and is reported to be dangerous because *huaqueros*, or looters, regularly visit the site.

Willey dated the site to the Middle Virú Period and the current seriation agrees with this date. While most sectors of this site date only to Middle Virú, I consider V-72 to also be a part of the site but this sector was built during the Early Virú Period.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 34, 35) mapped all five sectors of this site and these can be seen clearly on satellite imagery, although many of the residential terraces are poorly preserved and are more difficult to discern. Residential terraces appear to be more extensive than what Willey described or mapped but many I have not included these more distant sectors as part of the site because it is impossible to tell whether or not they are contemporary with the main site, and in some cases it is difficult to be certain that they are archaeological features at all. There are also residential ruins visible at the base of the hill on its north flank (facing the Huacapongo Valley) but Willey did not describe these and no ceramic information is available from them at present, and it is impossible to determine if these are part of or even contemporary with the main site. These are not included in the map.

**V-77 (Huaca San Juan No. 1)**

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú  
Type: Civic-Ceremonial Centre  
Size: 1.612 ha  
Location: 8.3733° S, 78.7291° W  

Description: This impressive stone-covered mound is one of the largest structures in Virú. It is a conspicuous landmark, built on the flat lands of the valley neck just below the confluence of the Virú and Huacapongo Rivers. Willey (1953: 136) notes that the huaca had drawn the attention of several researchers, but to his knowledge no excavations had been undertaken at the site; I know of no excavations at the huaca in the time since Willey conducted his survey. The huaca is located approximately 300 m west of the current location of the Virú River (which runs northeast-southwest in this part of the valley) with a modern road running immediately below the huaca, approximately 700 m east of the mouth of the Queneto Quebrada (the huaca was likely built using stone from the quebrada), and it is approximately 300 m southwest of V-103 (Huaca San Juan No. 2). From the highest point of the huaca an observer would have an excellent view of the entire valley neck, of Huaca Santa Clara, and of the four castillos on the valley margins. More importantly, though, any traveller passing through the valley neck (the only access to/from
the highlands) would not be able to miss Huaca San Juan, and it surely served as an important landmark for the valley.

I resurveyed the huaca on October 15 and 18, 2010. The huaca is built in five parts which I have labelled A-E, four square platforms of varying height in linear arrangement (sections A-D), and a linear, lower structure on the north side (section E) that hosted a cemetery that likely dates to the Late Virú period and Late Epoch (primarily Moche- and Chimú-style artifacts associated with looted burials). The overall size of the site is 90 m x 190 m and the largest, highest section (C) rises approximately 10-15 m above the surrounding fields. Each section of the mound is roughly flat-topped, but section C has sub-platforms, giving the impression that a lower mound may have been a plaza and this highest mound had space for civic or ceremonial events. Some internal rooms and divisions are visible on the mound, but the stone covering the mound is very scattered, making room divisions difficult to observe (see Willey for details). I did notice some small rooms, but these had the appearance of being superficial and evidence of small re-occupations of the site. On the north side of section C there are several scattered rock-walled rooms, with abundant shell material, chipped lithic cores, domestic ware ceramics, and scattered bone (these materials are present on all parts of the site, but appear to be particularly concentrated here). These rock-walled rooms may be either storage rooms or tombs. Although there are many looter’s pits that have caused significant damage to some parts of the site, no extensive excavations into the mound have been made, unlike at the nearby V-103, so it is difficult to gain a sense of the internal architecture of the mound. This, however, means that the site is reasonably well-preserved and would be a good candidate for future excavations, which surely would shed considerable light on the nature of ritual and administrative space in the middle Virú Valley.

The exterior walls of all four platforms are all steep-sided stone walls, but small sections of preserved stone walls are visible in places. These show that the mounds were originally built as stepped pyramids with straight walls made of stone. Nearly all of the stone used for construction is approximately 30-50 cm in diameter, but very large partially-buried stone (~200 cm x 50 cm x 20 cm) on the north side of section C gives the impression that this was the lintel for a large doorway. Willey noted stairs near here, leading into a gulley that separates section C from D, and it is possible that these stairs and this lintel stone was the main entrance to the site. I could not relocate these stairs or find any evidence of a pathway leading to the lintel stone. I did not observe any carved or decorated stone anywhere on the structure.

The internal sections of each mound were likely built of adobes or with the chamber-and-fill method. Section A, the lowest and smallest mound, is built with conical adobes; it appears to have been expanded at some point, and then section B was built at a later date, superseding the outer walls of section A. Sections B, C, and D appear to be made of plain rectangular adobes.

Willey (1953: 139) dated this site solely to the Middle Virú period based on Ford’s ceramic seriation. Ford’s collection consisted primarily of Castillo Plain, the domestic ware associated with Middle and Late Virú, and a very small scattering of Late Epoch plainwares. My own re-seriation agrees with Willey’s assertion that this site dates primarily to the Middle Virú period (and this is supported by one sherd of Carmelo Negative that I observed on the site, a diagnostic sherd of the Middle Virú Period), but Ford’s collection and my own survey also showed numerous Moche/Huancaco- and Chimú-style corporate wares, but these likely come from looted burials that are scattered across the entire site and concentrated in section E, which apparently served as a Late Virú and Late Epoch cemetery. Ford also recovered one sherd of
Guañape Red Plain, associated with the Guañape Period but also used in small quantities during the Early Virú Period. Furthermore, section A is built of conical adobes, an adobe style that Willey (1953) consistently associated with Early Virú structures. This association has not been demonstrated sufficiently to consider conical adobes to be diagnostic of Early Virú, but given that section A was clearly built first and later sections imposed upon it, it can be argued that section A does date to the Early Virú Period. Neither Ford nor Willey discusses how the ceramics were collected from this site but because it is a large site made up of several attached structures, it is entirely possible that Ford’s collection came from one specific part of the site and is not representative of the entire site. Finally, Zoubek (1997) drew parallels between this site and V-103, and the sites of V-148/V-149 (Huacas El Gallo and La Gallina), two adjacent stone-covered mounds in the Huacapongo Valley that were originally dated by Willey to the Virú Period, but were actually built in the Initial or Guañape Period. Zoubek hypothesizes that V-77 and V-103 are also much earlier sites that were later reoccupied. My re-serialization of Ford’s ceramic collection very securely dates this site to the Middle Virú Period, however, and until Zoubek’s hypothesis can be tested I argue that this site was first built during the Early Virú Period as a small huaca (section A), and then became a major civic-ceremonial structure in the Middle Virú Period.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent

V-78
Time period(s): Early Virú, Late Virú and Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.258 ha
Location: 8.4405° S, 78.7372° W
Description: Willey (1953: 260) described this site as being a small group of detached rooms on the southern margin of the valley, approximately 1km east of the Panamerican highway. Willey mapped the site (1953: fig. 58). As late as April 2011 this site showed clearly on Google Earth imagery but as of January 2012 it had been obliterated by modern fields that have appeared in recent years in this part of the valley.

Willey dated two components at the site, one Early Virú and one Late Epoch (Tomaval); the present seriation agrees with these dates. The site consists of at least six rooms ranging in size from 18x22 m to 10x10 m. Only one of these structures consisted of two rooms, the rest were single-room structures. Willey noted that the walls of all structures were built with small stone and mortar and hypothesized that these were the foundations and that the upper parts of the walls were adobe. Willey noted that the structures shared features of both Early Virú and Late Epoch architecture and he tentatively dated the structures themselves to the Late Epoch, but I question the accuracy of seriation based on architecture in Virú.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The site has recently been destroyed by agricultural fields but it appears clearly in older Google Earth imagery. Because the site did not appear in the aerial imagery used within ArcGIS to map sites I first drew it in Google Earth and then imported this sketch into ArcGIS and redrew it.

V-80 (Bitín Fortress)
Time period(s): Early Virú
Type: Fortification; Civic; Residential
Size: 2.817 ha
Location: 8.4541° S, 78.7579° W
Description: The Bitín Fortress is a large walled enclosure on the summit of Cerro Bitín, an isolated plateau-topped hill on the southern margin of the valley, just west of the Panamerican highway. The hill has steep, boulder-strewn sides with occasional alleys of drift sand reaching straight to the top of the hill, and it averages a height of approximately 240 m above the surrounding plain (Willey 1953: 92), making its summit a very strategic location. This site was clearly significant as an Early Virú redoubt or safe-haven and is discussed more fully in Chapters 5 and 6, but a brief description is appropriate here.

Willey (1953: 92) described the site in some detail and I resurveyed the site between October 25-27, 2010. A largely intact perimeter wall (~100x400 m) encloses the entirety of the highest plateau on the hill. The enclosed area consists of three natural prominences, each with a mound and associated structures (described more fully below). Ford’s ceramic collections came from around the westernmost and easternmost of these mounds and both date to the Early Virú Period, with trace amounts of later ceramics (Gloria Polished Plain and Middle Horizon-style corporate wares), which Ford attributed to intrusive burials (.F673, Papers of James Ford, Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History). At the northwestern end of the site there are abundant house terraces just outside of and below the perimeter wall, and a lower plateau on the northwestern end of the site contains numerous structures and a second perimeter wall. Willey (1953: 95) was not able to date these structures and apparently no ceramic collections were made in this part of the site. At the base of the hill on the southeastern side are three sites, V-79 (undated), V-81, and V-82 (both dating to Late Virú and the Late Epoch) and Willey mentioned that there are numerous unsurveyed cemeteries around the base of the hill. Peruvian archaeologist Estuardo La Torre, who served as my field assistant during my 2010 survey and has extensive experience working in Virú, hypothesized that the terraces, structures, and outer perimeter wall at Bitín dated to the Late Epoch (specifically Chimú) but this needs to be tested with further field research at the site. Based on Ford and Willey’s survey, however, the structures within the main perimeter wall can be safely dated to the Early Virú period and the remainder of this description deals only with these structures.

The site’s strategic significance cannot be overstated. It is a high, easily-defended spot with an excellent view of the entire middle valley, much of the lower valley, and of a major route into the valley from Chao and other points to the south (the route that the Panamerican Highway today passes through). Cerro Bitín is separated from the Compositan Range to the south and southwest by two kilometers of sandy plain (with some sites located in this plain); the Compositan Range hills are high, steep, and imposing and it is unlikely that any attacking force would come over them. More likely attackers would follow the route of the present-day Panamerican Highway which runs southeast of Bitín across 8 km of sandy plain from a pass through the hills that separate Virú and Chao. There is, however, absolutely no source of water on top of Bitín making it an unlikely spot for any long-term occupation, nor is it an appropriate spot from which to control trade into the valley because of the difficulty of accessing the summit of the hill. These aspects support Willey’s hypothesis that this site was a redoubt, or defensive location where threatened communities living on the valley floor could escape in times of duress.
Interestingly, the layout of structures within the site itself also supports the conclusion that the Bitín Fortress was a safe-haven. Occupations within the site are oriented around three natural prominences, each of which has been built up into huaca-like mounds using local stone (there are two adjacent mounds on the northernmost prominence, one being built considerably better than the other). Each of these mounds has several rock-walled room foundations associated with them, and each mound and group of rooms is separated from the others by natural ground, all within the single perimeter wall. This suggests that the site was occupied by autonomous, but allied, communities. Willey argues that this site was both a defensive fortification and a location for regular civic or community ceremonies. This site would be an ideal location for future study into the nature of warfare and community organization during the Early Virú period.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Note that outside of the main perimeter wall there are numerous house terraces and other structures, including an outer perimeter wall in the north and northwest part of the site. I map only the main perimeter wall and hypothesize that all structures outside of this wall date to later periods; this hypothesis needs to be tested by ground survey.

**V-83, V-85, V-86, V-87 (Compositan group)**

Time period(s): Guañape through Middle Virú  
Type: Civic; Residential  
Size:  
  - V-83: 1.287 ha  
  - V-85: 0.598 ha  
  - V-86: 1.113 ha  
  - V-87: 2.074 ha  
Location: 8.4718° S, 78.7757  
Description: These four sites, along with V-84 (Guañape period only) make up the Compositan Group at the northern foot of the Cerro Compositan range, approximately 2.5-3 km southwest of Cerro Bitín (V-80). Willey (1953: 48-52, 70-71) mapped each of these sites separately and collected separate ceramic collections for seriation from each, but given their similar placement, arrangement, and dates, I find it appropriate to discuss them all as a single site. Willey described V-83 and V-85 together as one, but described V-86 and V-87 as being separate sites, though essentially all forming a single community. V-83 and V-85 date to both the Guañape and Early Virú periods, V-87 dates only to the Early Virú Period, and V-86 dates to both the Early and Middle Virú periods. In order to maintain these differences in date and to account for the large amounts of unoccupied land between each house cluster, I map each of these as separate sites.

V-83 and V-85 consist of at least 25-30 houses and 70 rooms, with others undoubtedly destroyed by flooding in the millennia since this area was first occupied (Willey 1953: 49). Willey notes that houses range from having one to six rooms, with the average of two rooms. Rooms are arranged haphazardly and typically are rectangular or rectangular with rounded corners, though some are circular or C-shaped. Rooms vary in size from 2 m x 2 m to 4 m x 5 m with many large enough to be houses, but some are storage rooms. The rooms of V-83 are built around the base of a hill spur and V-85 is built in the quebrada between this spur and an unoccupied one to the east. There are also two bi-level platform mounds on the hill spur itself.
Willey was unsure whether these had a civic-ceremonial or defensive purpose, but based on the evidence at the nearby Cerro Bitín site (see above), I argue that these mounds can serve both functions. Given the presence of these platforms, this group can be seen as a true town with both residential and civic-ceremonial space.

V-86 is located in a quebrada south of V-83/V-85 and consists of approximately 13 remnant isolated building foundations over an area of 125 meters (Willey 1953: 70). All structures have one or two rooms and most are 2x3 m, although one larger central one is 7x8 m. V-87 is located in a different quebrada to the west of the other sites of the group but in a very similar setting. V-87 contains 15 structures within a radius of 100 m, and it is similar to the other sites of the group (Willey 1953: 70-71).

Although V-86 and V-87 were first occupied after V-83 and V-85, but were contemporary with the latter periods of those sites. Given that all sites in this area are of a similar age, I hypothesize that other isolated houses in the area are also of a similar date, but this needs to be tested. It is reasonable to suggest that the area was first occupied during the Guanape Period and became a major Early Virú settlement before being largely abandoned, with only V-86 continuing to see occupation into the Middle Virú period.

Mapping accuracy: Good (V-83); Poor (V-85, V-86, V-87). Willey (1953: Fig. 7, 8, 12, 13) mapped each of these sites but did not draw the entire group on a single map as he did for other similar site clusters, making it difficult to locate each site precisely. Furthermore, even at sites that can be accurately identified on current satellite imagery (namely V-83, fig. 7) there are inconsistencies between Willey’s map and current imagery that suggests that Willey’s sketch was inaccurate.

Furthermore, the area immediately north of these sites has been heavily altered by modern construction and this affects portions of V-83. V-85 cannot be identified conclusively and may be entirely destroyed by modern construction; a polygon based on Willey’s (1953: fig. 8) map of this site and located by his description of the site is used in its place. V-86 and V-87 are not impacted by this construction. Willey’s maps show several temporary drainages caused by El Niño flooding, and it is possible that these drainages have shifted and destroyed all or part of other sites in the time since Willey conducted his survey. At any rate, given the scattering of similar buildings throughout the area, it is difficult to locate any specific ones without relying on these drainages as Willey mapped them, which is not necessarily how they still appear today.

Finally, there are several other small buildings on the hill spurs and quebradas near these sites that Willey does not mention or map, and these make it difficult to determine which buildings are actually the sites that Willey maps, and which are other unmapped buildings. Taken together, V-83 can be mapped accurately but with inconsistencies. V-85 cannot be mapped, as mentioned above. V-86 and V-87 cannot be relocated with complete confidence, but areas that do resemble Willey’s maps can be seen for each; I map these areas and ensure that the area mapped is not larger than the area Willey showed on his original site maps.

V-92 (Huancaco No. 2)
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic
Size: 0.047 ha
Location: 8.4546° S, 78.8044° W
Description: Willey (1953: 215) declares “this site is one of the most interesting in the entire Valley.” It is a small isolated mound at the foot of a sand dune, and was covered by scrub growth during Willey’s survey (it is now partially covered by dune scrub and adjacent to cultivated fields). The bases of the mound is approximately 20 m square and the mound rises 4-5 m to a summit that is 7 m square. The structure is made out of molded adobe bricks, some cane-marked and others plain. Old excavations—which Willey implied were archaeological trenches rather than looter’s pits, but laments the fact that early excavations into Peruvian sites lacked any sort of recording—had revealed prepared clay walls and a floor with a square structure (2.64 m x 2.16 m x 1.18 m high) that was made from adobes and covered with a white clay plaster. Willey interpreted this structure as a throne and the room it was in as a throne room (see Willey 1953: Fig. 47 and Plate 29) and for evidence referred to the similarities between this “throne” and the types of thrones and throne-rooms seen in modeled Moche ceramics. This throne room was capped by later construction that brought the mound to its full height, but Willey saw no evidence of structures on the mound’s surface.

Ford’s collection here was quite small and dated to the Late Virú period, but Willey suggests that the mound was in use during both the Middle and Late Virú periods. The present seriation dates the site only to the Middle Virú period. Given the nature of the structure and its Middle Virú date, I conclude that this site served as a small ceremonial centre—with no attached civic component—for the region during Middle Virú times, possibly associated with the Middle Virú phase.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Due to scrub growth and the unoccupied sand dune that this site lies against, it is difficult to observe the actual site in aerial imagery. However I have walked past this dune and taken photos of adobe-brick ruins, helping me to confirm the location of the site. Willey’s description of the site is very clear, so an accurate map can be drawn.

**V-93 (Castillo de Huancaco, outlying section)**
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.667 ha
Location: 8.4597° S, 78.806° W
Description: Willey (1953: 202) describes this site as a 2-3 m high mound with an extent of approximately 75 m x 100 m. Willey observed adobes and evidence of architecture in various looter’s pits and hypothesized that this was a residential site, not simply a midden, but did not describe the site in any detail. Willey dated the site as strictly Late Virú and thus associated with the nearby Castillo de Huancaco, but the present seriation dates it securely to Middle Virú. Additional research at this mound would clarify whether it was an earlier structure that happened to be near Huancaco, or whether it was a residential area associated with Huancaco.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey describes this site as being located 150 m from the Castillo de Huancaco proper (V-88 and V-89), but does not say in which direction it is located, and does not further describe the location or place the site on the Castillo de Huancaco site map (1953: fig. 44). Willey’s master valley map shows this site as being due north of V-38, another segment of Huancaco that can be relocated with confidence (see description above). There are low mounds
approximately 150 m north of V-38, but it is difficult to distinguish a cultural mound from the abundant natural dunes in the area, some of which have been recently ploughed. Therefore I have drawn an elliptical polygon of the extent that Willey described (75 m x 100 m) and placed it 150 m north of V-38.

**V-95**  
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú  
Type: Civic  
Size: 0.183 ha  
Location: 8.4115° S, 78.8363° W  
Description: This is a small mound located near the northern margin of the valley. Today it lies within the extent of the valley proper (i.e. lands that were irrigated prior to the Chavi-Mochic project of the 1990s), but it may have been in the desert sands of the north margin when it was occupied. It is a 35 m x 56 m mound with a 5 m x 35 m summit platform that rises 5 m above the surrounding flats. Willey (1953: 90) thought that this site was a mound constructed out of adobes—rather than a midden or tell-like accumulation—because of its steep sides, but he did not observe any exposed adobes. Willey dates the site primarily to the Early Virú period with later re-occupations during the Late Virú period and Late Epoch. The present seriation dates this site solely to the Early and Middle Virú periods, though a very small collection of Late Epoch domestic and corporate wares suggest an insignificant re-occupation at that time.  
Mapping accuracy: Excellent

**V-101**  
Time period(s): Early Virú  
Type: Midden; Funerary  
Size: 1.025 ha  
Location: 8.4059° S, 78.8903° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 79, 100) very briefly describes this site as a midden with evidence of 2-3 rock-lined grave shafts, and dates the site to the Early Virú period. The site contains 952 HPP sherds, confirming it as an Early Virú site, with a very small amount of Guañape and Late Virú sherds. The large number of domestic ware sherds also indicates that this site was likely a midden. Willey described the midden area as being 75 m x 200 m and composed of dark sand and pulverized shell, but did not discuss its location, and as such it is impossible to relocate or map this site. On the master valley map the site is located near the village of Puerto Morin on the north margin of the valley and approximately one kilometre back from the shore, and close to the larger Early Virú site V-66.  
I attempted to visit this site on November 15, 2010, but it is not clear whether I visited the correct site or a nearby one, possibly not described by Willey. During my visit to this site I noticed a small amount of lithic material, one mortar stone, and very few sherds. The site was primarily a shell midden.  
Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey does not describe the precise location of the site and only describes it very vaguely, making it difficult to relocate. The general area where the site is
located is now cultivated and there is a good chance that it has been destroyed or significantly damaged by modern cultivation. Willey describes the size of the site and its rough location is secure, so I have drawn a polygon of that size over the site’s location as Willey’s master map shows it.

**V-102**
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 1.915 ha
Location: 8.3952° S, 78.7442° W
Description: Willey (1953: 196) describes this site as being located in a small quebrada opening off the north margin of the Virú Valley a short distance downslope from Castillo de Tomaval (V-51) and “between a spur of the bordering hills and two small detached hills in the quebrada bottom” and with a stone defensive wall running across the quebrada protecting it from the main valley. No quebrada with visible archaeological remains matches this description entirely, but modern structures in the area may have modified or removed these small hills and rock wall or they may simply not appear clearly on satellite imagery. The main area of the site, as described by Willey, is a refuse area of approximately 100 m x 200 m on the quebrada floor. This area contains a cemetery with a diameter of ~30 m and several stone-walled rooms arranged haphazardly (averaging 5 m x 5 m but the largest of which is 10 m x 11 m) with many destroyed houses. There are also terraced houses running along the lower slope of a hill slope overlooking the quebrada. Willey dated the site to Early and Middle Virú but the present seriation dates it solely to Middle Virú.

Mapping accuracy: Good. The site’s location, as described by Willey, is difficult to identify by landscape features, but there is a series of terraced houses just upslope and adjacent to a sandy area with abundant looting activity. The extent of both hill slope terraces and looted refuse areas are both larger and more extensive in this area than Willey described, however, so it is difficult to determine whether this is the site that Willey described or is another undocumented site in the area. I map the large refuse area and adjacent terraced houses as the site.

**V-103 (Huaca San Juan No. 2)**
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Civic-Ceremonial Centre
Size: 0.831 ha
Location: 8.3717° S, 78.7263° W
Description: This large mound in the valley neck just below the confluence of the Virú and Huacapongo Rivers is located approximately 200 m west of the current location of the Virú River (which runs roughly southwest-northeast in this section of the valley) and approximately 350 m northeast of V-77 (Huaca San Juan No. 1), a similar but much larger mound (Willey 1953: 82). V-103 has an extent of 53 m x 74 m and a summit of 16 m x 36 m with an 8 m rise. A ~65 m long ramp extends from the southeast corner of the mound and runs southeast towards the river and a modern road; given the orientation of this ramp it is likely that an ancient road ran in a
similar location adjacent to the river. This ramp also leads to an ancient bank of the river itself, but the Virú River was likely never carried enough water to be a transportation route itself. From the top of this mound an observer has excellent views of the entire valley neck and would be both a good location to observe travellers (though hilltop locations are better) and, more importantly, would have been a conspicuous landmark.

I surveyed this site on October 14, 2010. Although Willey only surveyed the mound itself I noticed ceramics along the road below the mound and it is possible that the mound itself was the centre of a larger town, but this needs to be tested with further fieldwork. There are several large trenches excavated into the mound (at least some of which were present during Willey’s survey) and many looter’s pits. The northern part of the mound is essentially destroyed but the south is better-preserved. There is scattered human bone around some looter’s pits and the ceramics, textiles, and gourds associated with these bones show them to be Late Virú and Late Epoch burials (Moche- and Chimú-style artifacts). The numerous excavations into the huaca reveal its architecture. The mound is surrounded by a loose-fitting stone retaining but the mound itself is largely made up of cylindrical and truncated conical (bullet-shaped) adobes or is built with mixed stone and adobes (with a row of stone, then several rows of adobe, then another row of stone, and so on). Willey explicitly dates conical adobes to the Early Virú period but this has not been sufficiently demonstrated to be able to say that conical adobes are diagnostic of Early Virú construction. There are also some plastered walls that were then covered by later construction, giving the impression that at one point the exterior of the mound was plastered and possibly painted (no paint is preserved in exposed walls). There are some partially-exposed rooms that may be storage bins in the same trench as the plastered walls but more excavation is needed to confirm this. It is evident that there are several construction events at the site, but Estuardo La Torre, who accompanied me during my survey, considered these all to be from the same period. It would be relatively easy to return to this site to clean up the exposed trenches, obtain a better idea of the construction sequences of the site, and collect material for radiometric dating.

The site is relatively clean of artifacts other than those associated with looted burials. Abundant shell at the top of the mound indicates that this site had a trading relationship with the coast. There is a small amount of expedient chipped lithic artifacts around the site but no ground stone artifacts were observed. One piece of very dark, hard wood (possibly madera negra which comes from the Amazon jungle) was observed and this was likely a digging stick.

Willey dated this site to the Early Virú period based on Ford’s ceramic seriation and the conical adobe construction, with a small Late Epoch (Estero) reoccupation. Zoubek (1997) suggested that this site and V-77 actually date to the Initial/Guañape Period based on architectural similarity to V-148/V-149 (Huacas El Gallo and La Gallina), but he never tested this. My reseriation dates this site from Early Virú through to the Late Epoch but this is based on only 98 domestic ware sherds and 6 corporate ware sherds (all dating to the Late Epoch) from Ford’s collection. I argue that this site was built during and largely dates to the Early Virú Period with only a small occupation continuing into the Middle Virú Period. The site was later re-used as a cemetery with very small occupations through the Late Virú Period and Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú
Type: Midden; Funerary
Size: 0.456 ha
Location: 8.3959° S, 78.7446° W
Description: Willey (1953: 294) very briefly describes this site as an Early Virú midden and Late Epoch cemetery along the sandy north margin of the Virú Valley. Ford (archives) described this site as being approximately half a kilometer downstream from the Castillo de Tomaval (V-51). Willey did not describe the size nor the precise location of the site. The current seriation dates this site to both Early and Middle Virú, likely as a midden for both periods. Intrusive burials at the site likely do date to the Late Epoch but the ceramics from these burials did not significantly contribute to the seriation.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. This site cannot be relocated because Willey did not describe its size or setting, and there are essentially continuous looted cemeteries along the north margin of the valley in this area. Middens along the sandy margins are typically not visible on satellite imagery. I have mapped one area of visible looter’s pits, indicating a cemetery, west of V-102, since Willey showed this site being west of V-102 on the master valley map. This is farther from Castillo de Tomaval than the ~500 m that Ford described and presumably his estimate was off but it is possible that I have not identified the correct sites in this area (including V-18 and V-102) and all three should be closer to Tomaval. I am reasonably confident that I have relocated V-18 and V-102, however.

V-105
Time period(s): Early Virú
Type: Midden
Size: 3.35 ha
Location: 8.4056° S, 78.8854° W
Description: Willey (1953: 79) only briefly describes this site as a thin midden with a scatter of Early Virú ceramics, located near V-101. My reseriation of Ford’s ceramic collections strongly agrees with the date of this site as a pure Early Virú occupation. Willey notes that this midden is 300 m or 400 m in extent, but does not describe its width. He goes on to mention that this entire margin of the valley is covered with midden deposits, most of which he dated to the Early Virú Period, but did not map or document the majority of these.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Because of the very basic description for the site it is impossible to relocate it or map it in any detail, so I have drawn an ellipse with an extent of 340 m and a width of 125 m to represent this site, and placed it over the point for V-105, as it has been derived from Willey’s master map of all Virú sites.

V-109
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Funerary
Size: 0.75 ha
Location: 8.4587° S, 78.817° W
Description: Willey (1953: 176) briefly describes this as the only true Middle Virú cemetery encountered in the valley (most Middle Virú graves were found in sites that were not strictly cemeteries, and most true cemeteries dated to the Late Virú Period or to the Late Epoch). This cemetery is approximately 75 m x 100 m and sits on the southwest flank of Cerro Sausalito on the southern margin of the valley approximately half-way between the Panamerican Highway and the Pacific shore. Based on the domestic ware present at the site it dates strictly to the Middle Virú Period, but there is a small amount of Late Virú and Late Epoch domestic ware sherd material, as well as a modest amount of corporate ware sherds from these later periods. For these reasons it is reasonable to suggest that this site was first used as a cemetery during the Middle Virú Period but continued to be used to a lesser extent during later periods.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey’s description of this site’s location is very precise and satellite imagery at this location shows an area of looter’s pits of almost exactly the dimensions that Willey described. These slightly larger dimensions (85 m x 130 m) have been mapped.

V-110, V-111, V-112 (Rinconada Sites)
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 2.36 ha
Location: 8.4762° S, 78.7413° W
Description: Willey (1953: 196, 248, 331) described these sites separately, along with V-113 (dating to the Late Virú Period and Late Epoch only), but their similar setting and architecture and close proximity to each other suggests that they are all essentially different sectors of the same site. Willey dated V-110 to the Early and Late Virú Periods (no Middle), V-111 to the Late Epoch, and V-112 to the Early Virú Period and Late Epoch, but my reseriation indicates that V-110 was used from Early Virú continuously through Late Virú and that both V-111 and V-112 were used from the Middle Virú Period continuously into the Late Epoch.

All of these sites sit on the sandy plains on the north and west side of a small, rocky hill, and are considerable outliers in the valley, sitting some 3-4 km south/southeast of the maximum ancient limits of irrigated land in Virú, and over 2 km southeast of V-79, their nearest known neighbouring site. Willey (1953: 190) also notes that these sites are located 2 km from the major Prehispanic canal that ran along the south margin of the valley. The sites lie north of a range of rocky hills (the Compositan Range) that divide Virú from the Chao Valley to the south, and cut the middle Virú Valley off from the ocean. The Rinconada group is such an outlier that it actually lies approximately 1/3 of the way between Virú and Chao, which are approximately 10 km apart at their margins. The remote location of these sites far from either Virú or Chao water sources could indicate that there was another smaller river between the two valleys, or some form of irrigation running towards these sites, but this is unlikely since more sites should be expected along the line of this unapparent water source, and Willey did not map any such sites nor can I observe any in satellite imagery of the region although it is today covered by extensive avocado orchards that destroyed or obscured sites on the sandy plains. There are numerous linear anomalies visible in the rocky hills to the south of this group but without ground-truthing it is impossible to determine whether the more subtle of these are archaeological, natural, or the result of modern activity in the region, but there are clearly several modern roads and some modern
canals in the area. More likely these sites surrounded a spring or aquifer rather than any previously unknown branch of either the Virú or Chao Rivers.

Willey notes that all of these sites were built with rock-walled foundations but likely had adobe walls that have not been preserved. The sites are adjacent to, but not built on, a rocky hill. I am unable to observe them in the satellite imagery because their reported location is now covered by modern avocado tree orchards and the sites were likely destroyed when this orchard was planted, but Willey’s size descriptions, as well as a site map for V-110, are good enough to map the approximate extent of each site, although this means that their precise locations are not known and can only be derived from Willey’s master valley map, which is imprecise.

V-110 is composed primarily of a rock-walled quadrangle of 22 m x 26 m with some internal rooms and a few small 3 m x 3 m external rooms, and located 25 m northeast of this structure is a 7 m x 7 m and 2 m high (Willey 1953: 196, fig. 40). V-111 is a rectangular stone-walled structure of 13 m x 14.5 m oriented northeast-southwest, with a 6.5 m-wide terrace extending along the northeast wall of the structure (Willey 1953: 248). V-112 is apparently larger but is poorly-preserved. Willey (1953: 331) suggests that stone-walled structures are scattered about an area with a diameter of 200 m.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. As described above, the sites themselves lay on the sandy flats below a rocky hill, and these flats are now cultivated by an extensive orchard of avocado trees. This large industrial agricultural complex likely bulldozed all structures, and high-resolution satellite imagery is not publicly available prior to the construction of this orchard. Therefore I have drawn three separate polygons over the centre point for each site, as identified on Willey’s master site map of Virú. For V-110 I have drawn a polygon congruent with Willey’s map of the site. For V-111 I have drawn a polygon of 13 m x 21 m, in line with Willey’s description for this site. For V-112 I have drawn a circle with a diameter of 200 m to account for the approximate size of this site. I map each site separately for analytical purposes, but they all likely can be considered a single multi-component site.

**V-114 and V-117**

Time period(s): Middle Virú (V-114 also has Late Virú component)

Type: Midden

Size:

- V-114: 1.614 ha
- V-117: 2.03 ha

Location: 8.4731° S, 78.8221° W (V-114); 8.5211° S, 78.8151° W (V-117)

Description: Willey (1953: 118) very briefly describes both these sites as middens with a diameter of ~100-200 m, located on the sandy south margins of Virú. V-114 is 4 km back from the Pacific shore and may have been just inside of the Prehispanic limits of irrigation in the valley, while V-117 lies 1km back from the beach and outside of the Prehispanic limits of irrigation. Willey had dated these sites, along with nearby V-121, as all being Middle Virú but my seriation shows V-121 to date to Late Virú and the Late Epoch, while V-114 dates to both Middle and Late Virú, and V-117 dates to Middle Virú only.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey’s descriptions for these sites are very general and midden sites are very difficult to see on satellite imagery, and V-114 has likely been destroyed by modern
agricultural fields. For these reasons, I have mapped each by drawing a circle with a diameter of 150 m over the point on Willey’s master valley map that indicates the location of these sites.

**V-126**

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú (residential), Late Virú (Funerary only)

Type: Residential

Size: 0.899 ha

Location: 8.4602° S, 78.7978° W

Description: Willey (1953: 78) describes this site as a midden with adobe structures. Because of the structures, I prefer to call this site residential. Willey dated the primary occupation to the Early Virú Period with later reuse as a Late Virú cemetery. Based on Ford’s notes for the site (archives) it is clear that he felt that the structures and all Guañape Red Plain and HPP sherds from the site dated to the Early Virú Period, and that all other sherds (primarily Castillo Plain with a small number of Gloria Polished Plain and Late Plainwares, as well as 34 Huancaco/Moche style corporate ware sherds; see Appendix A Tables 1 and 2) dated Late Virú burials, but he does not demonstrate that these were collected from separate parts of this site. It may well be true that this site was only used as a residential site during the Early Virú Period and then was only used as a cemetery during the Late Virú Period but by the methodologies used in the current seriation I date its residential use to both Early and Middle Virú and it was likely abandoned sometime during the Middle Virú Period, and was certainly used as a Late Virú cemetery.

The site covers an area of approximately 100 m on low hills in the southern margin of the valley, approximately 700 m east of Huancaco on the other side of the large hill that backs Huancaco. I attempted to survey this site on November 3, 2010, but had difficulty relocating I because the site, including both the extent of conical adobe structures (which Willey dates to both the Guañape and Early Virú periods but which at this time cannot be conclusively considered diagnostic) and looted graves, covers a far larger extent than Willey had discussed, and it appears that this entire sandy, hilly quebrada is covered with sites. Based on my own survey I can agree that all looted burials date to the Late Virú Period, but several Guañape-style sherds were also recovered, and it appears that this area also had significant Guañape occupations. Willey (1953: 52) dated nearby V-128, farther south and up the quebrada from V-126, to the Guañape Period (see below) and the current reseriation dated V-127, on a hill spur southeast of V-126, to both the Guañape and Early Virú Periods. Because I could not conclusively identify this site I was unable to fully survey it, and it cannot be easily identified on aerial imagery because, although there are abundant looted graves apparent in the imagery, the midden/residential areas themselves cannot be seen.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Although there are many looted graves visible in satellite imagery for this region, the extent of these graves and also the extent of the scatter of conical adobes that I observed are larger than Willey’s size description for this site. Like V-126 and V-128 and possibly V-127 are all nodes of a single site, but for my current purposes I draw an outline of approximately 100 m diameter around the central part of V-126, as Willey identified it on the master Virú map.
**V-127**

**Time period(s):** Guanape and Early Virú  
**Type:** Civic; Residential  
**Size:** 0.957 ha  
**Location:** 8.463° S, 78.7966° W

**Description:** This site, on the crest and slope of a hill in the same quebrada as V-126 and V-128, is about 80 m x 150 m and consists of two enclosed structures and a midden area (Willey 1953: 58). Willey described the site as containing the partially-destroyed foundations of one large rectangular structure with approximate dimensions of 24 m x 54 m bisected by a wall, and behind (south) of this on a separate knoll of the hill is a similar, but smaller structure. Most of the foundations are stone but the wall bisecting the larger structure was made of conical adobes. Willey hypothesizes that most foundation walls were stone but that the structures themselves were built of adobe because stones are relatively scarce amongst the structures. Willey suggests that parts of these structures may have been roofed but it is unlikely that they were entirely roofed due to their large size. Given their form and the presence of midden-like deposits at the site, as well as the general occupation of this quebrada, I suggest that these large structures at V-127 served as some sort of civic and/or ceremonial space and that this site was the civic-ceremonial centre of this quebrada.

Willey dated this site to the Guanape Period but the present seriation clearly shows that this site had an extensive Early Virú occupation in addition to its Guanape occupation.

**Mapping accuracy:** Good. Willey (1953: fig. 10) mapped this site and also described it clearly. There are now considerably more looter’s pits in the area than appear to have been present when Willey conducted his survey and the two nearby sites (V-126 and V-128) are difficult to locate, but there are two linear formations of a similar size and arrangement to those Willey described for this site, along a northeast-southwest ridge in approximately the location Willey described. I map these linear arrangements and the surrounding hill slope as V-127. The only word of caution here is that these apparent structures are quite heavily damaged, covered in looter’s pits, and do not show up very clearly on satellite imagery, and are therefore ambiguous and potentially not the features that Willey described.

**V-128**

**Time period(s):** Early Virú  
**Type:** Residential  
**Size:** 1.88 ha  
**Location:** 8.4627° S, 78.7978° W

**Description:** Willey (1953: 52) describes this site as being located on a 50 m wide hillcrest and extending for approximately 300 m, and the site is located approximately 300 m south and uphill from V-126, and approximately 250 m southwest of V-127. Willey notes that there are 2-3 terraced parts of the hill that appear to be man-made, but otherwise the site consists of sherds, stone, and shell, and may have had some looted burials (note that numerous looter’s pits, presumably looting burials, are visible on current satellite imagery). Ford (1949; archives) dated this site to the Early Virú Period and showed it as being close to the Guanape/Early Virú
transition (Ford 1949: fig. 5), but Willey accepts this earlier date and dates the site entirely as Guañaape for unknown reasons. While some Guañaape Period domestic and corporate ware sherds are present (see Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2), the site very clearly dates to Early Virú only (notwithstanding a small later re-use as a Late Virú cemetery, as shown by some Late Plainwares and one sherd of Huancaco/Moche-style corporate ware).

Although I did not intentionally survey this site, during my attempts to relocate V-126 on November 3, 2010 I crossed both this site and V-127, and found great difficulty in determining any boundaries between these sites as all contained scattered adobes, sherds, and looted burials (see description for V-126). This entire quebrada was likely a large village or town that dated primarily to the Early Virú Period, but until this area is studied in greater depth it is most appropriate to map the site according to Willey’s description.

Mapping accuracy: Good. While the area of looter’s pits visible on satellite imagery and my own survey of the quebrada show the extent of each site to be greater than Willey described, Willey’s description of the site as extending for 300 m along a 50 m-wide ridge fits reasonably well with the extent of visible looter’s pits along one such ridge south of V-126, although this ridge is somewhat larger than Willey’s description. I have mapped this ridge as the site, keeping to Willey’s described dimensions.

**V-129 (El Cerrito or Huancaquito Cemetery)**

**Time period(s):** Early Virú through Late Epoch

**Type:** Midden; Funerary

**Size:** 0.438 ha

**Location:** 8.4584° S, 78.8371° W

**Description:** Willey (1953: 232) describes this as a cemetery containing some 75 looted burials dug into dirt rather than the much more common sand. Willey notes that there are scattered adobes and he interprets these as tomb linings rather than house structures. The midden/cemetery has an extent of about 30 m x 150 m. It is located on the isolated Huancaquito hill (see V-130 for a fuller description of this hill) at the crux of the southern and northern parts of the hill.

Domestic wares at the site are relatively common with roughly equivalent quantities of Castillo Plain (predominantly Middle and Late Virú) and Late Plainwares (Late Epoch), with smaller quantities of HPP (Early Virú but corporate wares at the site are almost all typical of the Late Epoch (see Appendix A Tables 1 and 2). Willey interpreted this data to argue that the site was a small Early Virú midden that was later reused as a Late Virú and Late Epoch cemetery and used this cemetery to support his dates for the nearby Huancaquito castillo (V-130). Given that there are only three corporate ware sherds of Moche/Huancaco style (typical of Late Virú) I argue that it is more appropriate to see this as an Early and Middle Virú midden that later held very few Late Virú burials but several Late Epoch burials.

**Mapping accuracy:** Poor. The midden/cemetery itself is not described in detail and Willey does not provide details that would indicate its precise location. Furthermore there are many modern structures on this hill that obscure the site and likely destroyed portions of it. An area of looter’s pits is visible on satellite imagery; this area is smaller than what Willey described and does not entirely fit with his description of the location of this site, but presumably this area is part of the
site that Willey described, if not the site itself. I have therefore drawn a 30 m x 150 m polygon centered on this area.

**V-130 (Huancacuito; also known as El Cerrito or Castillo del Inca)**
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch  
Type: Civic  
Size: 0.28 ha  
Location: 8.4607° S, 78.8379° W  

Description: This is one of two sites (the other being V-129) that sit on Huancacuito, a small isolated hill rising 20-30 m above the surrounding fields, situated on the present-day southern bank of the Virú River 5 km back from the Pacific shore and a little over a kilometer northwest of Cerro del Piño, a larger isolated hill in this part of the valley (see description for V-132). Bennett (1939) also briefly described this site. This site is located on the southern arm of this cruciform hill and consists of two major parts, a flat-topped adobe platform on the main ridge of this part of the hill and a tapia-walled building on the southern side of this hill (Willey 1953: 227, 263; see also fig 60). Both structures encompass some natural rock outcrops and the adobe platform is built around a promontory of the hill. The ceramic collection for the site was collected primarily from this adobe platform since the building to the south contained few sherds and Ford (1949) dated it to the Late Virú Period. Based on architectural similarities to other Late Epoch sites Willey dated the southern tapia wall building to the Late Epoch (Tomaval Period). My reseriation of the site shows that it was in use from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch. I agree with Willey’s assessment that the southern structure is considerably more recent, however. Although I did not survey this site satellite imagery shows a structure that is clearly the same that Willey mapped and considered to be archaeological (1953: fig. 60), but some walls of this structure have been destroyed and others have been incorporated into modern structures built on this hill. I find it unlikely that these walls would be preserved this well if this structure dated to Middle or Late Virú times. Therefore for my purposes I only consider the adobe platform to be part of the Middle and Late Virú component of this site, and my map reflects this.

Willey (1953: 227) describes the large adobe platform component of the site as being 22 m x 62 m and oriented along the long access of the hill (north-south), with two poorer-preserved platforms just south of it. One of these incorporates the highest promontory of the hill and the one south of it is enclosed by a rock wall on its southern side. The structures themselves are built of plain rectangular adobes or irregular lumps of adobe and the structures are built to complement the natural topography of the hill. Willey labels this site as a castillo-fortification complex but does not describe this or explain his rationale. Presumably Willey considered the platform’s hilltop location to be defensive in nature but this platform is not enclosed by defensive walls and, apart from setting, does not closely resemble the fortification and castillo complexes from other parts of the valley. I therefore designate this site as a more-generic civic building.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Although the walls that Willey (1953: fig. 6) mapped on the adobe platform cannot be seen in satellite imagery the southern structure (Late Epoch component) is clearly the same that Willey mapped and Willey accurately mapped the landscape features of the hill itself and these allow me to accurately map the adobe platform component of the site.
V-132 (Cerro del Piño)
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú
Type: Fortification
Size: 1.579 ha
Location: 8.4647° S, 78.8277° W
Description: This fortified site is quite similar in setting and layout to Cerro Bitín (V-80), though it is smaller and sits on a lower hill than Bitín. Willey (1953: 95-97; fig. 19) describes Cerro del Piño in some detail and I also surveyed the site on November 2, 2010. The hill itself is an irregular-shaped isolated hill south of the river in the lower valley and is located approximately half way between Cerro Huancaquito and Cerro Sausalito and approximately 8 km west-southwest of Cerro Bitín. The hill has a maximum height of 30 m above the surrounding fields and is less imposing than Cerro Bitín but it similarly has steep sides and a plateau-like summit with a commanding view of the lower valley. In fact Cerro Bitín can be clearly seen from the top of this site and presumably the two fortified sites could signal to each other. Cerro del Piño overlooks a part of the valley that cannot be seen from Cerro Bitín but Bitín has a better overall view, including a view of the pass to valleys to the south, and the two sites may have worked in tandem to protect residents of the southern margin of the valley during Early Virú times.

The site itself is surrounded by a 60 m wide and 200 m long irregular perimeter wall (enhanced on the southern side by a large natural dike that runs across the hill) and clearly is a defensive/fortified site. There are three natural mounds within the enclosure and two of these have been topped with artificial structures to form two platforms, and the southern of these also has several structures built around it. The layout of the site is very similar to Bitín and Willey argued that they clearly were built for the same reason and served the same purpose as a refuge. Although this site is far more accessible than Cerro Bitín and could be inhabited regularly with relatively easy access to the fields, I agree that this site was used primarily as temporary refuge during times of duress, and a paucity of artifacts or shell at the site supports this. As with Bitín, the fact that there are separate but similar structures within the perimeter wall also indicates that the site was used by separate communities who were affiliated with each other, and each area has both dwelling and civic/ceremonial space.

I build on Willey’s argument to suggest that, given their considerable similarity, both Cerro Bitín and Cerro del Piño were built at roughly the same time by the same people during the Early Virú Period. Unlike Bitín, however, Cerro del Piño continued to be used into the Middle Virú Period, a conclusion that Willey reached and that I agree with. Interestingly, Ford (1949) made two separate collections here (see Appendix A Table 1). Collection A comes from the north part of the enclosure and dates more to Early Virú and Collection B comes from the southern part of the enclosure and dates more to Middle Virú (with some mixture in both collections). This suggests that there may be some internal division in the age of the site but this needs to be explored with further research.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent

V-133 (Cerro del Piño, South Cemetery)
Time period(s): Early through Late Virú
Type: Residential; Funerary
Jordan T. Downey (2015)

Size: 0.46 ha
Location: 8.468° S, 78.8294° W
Description: Willey (1953: 60, 232) describes this 50 m x 100 m site, located on the sandy southern slope of Cerro del Piño, as a Guañape Period cemetery with some midden deposits that was later reused as a Late Virú cemetery. Willey also noted some adobe- and tapia-walled structures within the cemetery and suggested that the site was a residential site that was later reused as a cemetery. Based on architecture Willey considered the possibility that the structures dated to the Middle Virú Period but denied this possibility based on the lack of a Middle Virú ceramic component; my reseriation shows that there is, in fact, a Middle Virú component. There is a small quantity of Guañape Polished Plain (typical of the Guañape Period but still used into the Early Virú Period) and one Ancon style corporate ware sherd (diagnostic of the Guañape Period), but the reseriation dates this site more securely to Early Virú rather than Guañape. There is also a single Virú negative sherd, suggesting a Middle Virú burial, and a relatively large quantity of Huancaco/Moche-style corporate ware (see Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2), supporting the argument that this site was used as a Late Virú cemetery. Based on this evidence, I argue that this site was a residential site during the Early and Middle Virú periods and was later used as a Late Virú cemetery.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey (1953: 232) describes the location of the site fairly precisely, but because it is a cemetery and midden it is difficult to observe on satellite imagery. Looter’s pits, indicative of burials, can be seen in this area, however. I have therefore drawn a 50 m x 100 m polygon in the area described by Willey.

V-135 (Cerro del Piño, West Cemetery)
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Funerary
Size: 1.133 ha
Location: 8.4654° S, 78.8298° W
Description: Willey (1953: 233) dates this 75 m x 150 m cemetery to the Late Virú Period and Late Epoch, but there are enough domestic ware sherds of earlier types (though no earlier corporate ware) that I also include a Middle Virú component. Willey identified approximately 75 looted burials from the site but did not describe any structures or evidence of adobe construction so this site can be considered a pure cemetery. The site is located on the western side of Cerro del Piño.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey only describes the size of this site and its very general location (western side of Cerro del Piño) but its placement relevant to other sites is fairly precise on Willey’s master map. Sure enough, there is an area of looter’s pits (indicating a cemetery) with the rough dimensions that Willey describes on the western side of the hill; this area has been mapped as the site.

V-136
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Midden
Size: 0.715 ha  
Location: 8.4624° S, 78.8302° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 120) very briefly describes this site as a 75 m x 100 m midden on the slope of Cerro del Piño. He dates it as Middle Virú only, and my seriation agrees with this. Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey’s description is not enough to relocate the site except by the master valley map, although this is fairly precise due to the small size of the hill and the relationship between this and other sites. Several modern buildings also cover the lower flanks of the hill and these obscure sites. I have therefore drawn a 75 m x 100 m polygon centered over the approximate location of this site as derived from Willey’s master map.

**V-137**  
Time period(s): Early to Middle Virú transition  
Type: Fortification  
Size: 0.755 ha  
Location: 8.4728° S, 78.7953° W  
Description: This is a series of four built-up areas and platforms along a 2-3 km long ridge in the remote, barren hills behind Huancaco (Willey 1953: 97-98). The ridge, the highest in the Cerro Compositan range, is about 250 m above sea level and has very steep, rocky sides, making this site very difficult to approach and leading Willey to declare it an obvious fortification, although it lacks perimeter walls unlike similar refuge-style fortified sites (see V-80 and V-132). Willey surmises that these sites may have been permanently inhabited but I find this unlikely since the inhabitants would have had to walk down a treacherous slope and over 1.5 km in the nearest direction to get water. Rather I prefer to see these as retreat/refuge sites to be used in times of duress. In addition to being built in a defensive location, their remoteness on top of a hill with no nearby structures also means that they would have been hidden, so their main line of defense may simply have been hiding. Also, unlike the castillo-type fortifications seen in the valley neck, the location of this site does not suggest that it was built to signal the power or military presence of a local polity but rather it seems to be a site for refuge. I have not visited this site and Willey did not publish any photos, however, so it is difficult to tell just what this site is like without ground-truthing; these inferences are based off of Willey’s brief description and my analysis of the topography surrounding the site as it appears on satellite imagery.

Willey (1953: 97-98) interprets the structures as primarily house platforms and rock-walled terraces strung along several hundred metres of the ridge top (he does not specify the exact size of the site) concentrated in four areas—which he interprets primarily as house platforms—with no structures or artifacts between each concentration. There are a total of 20-25 platforms and each is a 4-7 m square with 5-6 rooms in each, with the rooms built out to the entire extent of the flattened part of the ridge. Willey notes that the fourth and highest terrace (he does not mention the cardinal orientation of this terrace, but presumably it is the southernmost one) has a stone pyramid mound built with a diameter of 7 m on one platform, showing evidence of some civic/ceremonial space at the site.

The ceramic collection from this site is very small but is primarily Castillo Plain with a small amount of HPP (see Appendix A, Table 1). Willey dated this site to the Early Virú Period but this ceramic distribution is more typical of Middle Virú, with the caution that this date is not
secure because the ceramic collection is so small. That said, this site does bear a similarity to V-80 and V-132, which both securely date to the Early Virú Period (with V-132 also dating to Middle Virú), especially as all of these sites are defensive or refuge sites with several independent clusters of structures and some civic/ceremonial space. Taking these similarities and the ceramic distribution into account I argue that this site dates essentially to the transition between the Early Virú and the Middle Virú periods.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey does not map this site individually and does not describe its overall extents, but it is the only site in the vicinity and is located along a specific ridge of the Cerros Compositan. There are structures visible in this area and I draw these as the site. Satellite imagery is of mediocre quality in this area, however, so it is difficult to observe all structures or to determine the total extent of the site. I have therefore drawn a polygon along the ridge for as long as structures can be definitively seen.

**V-138**
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Fortification
Size: 0.031 ha
Location: 8.465° S, 78.8029° W

Description: This is a small fortified site on the hill south of and overlooking Huancaco (Willey 1953: 176). A platform at the site was constructed in two parts, the higher one being semicircular in shape with a diameter of 7 m and, slightly lower than this, a rectangular platform with approximate dimensions of 5 m x 7 m. The platform is made from stone and adobe retaining walls. Willey dates this site entirely to the Middle Virú Period and the present seriation agrees with this. Willey considered this site to be an observation post for Huancaco but that site, for the most part, was not contemporary with V-138. The site is situated at the top of a steep, but not particularly treacherous, ridge that climbs the hill from near Huancaco itself and it has a commanding view of the southern margin of the lower valley, so it is conceivable that this site was built for observation rather than defense or as a true fortification. During my survey of the site on November 3, 2010 we collected llama dung and it appears that the site was used as llama corrals at some point, but this was not likely its main purpose.

Mapping accuracy: Good. The site itself is very difficult to observe in satellite imagery since it appears like a cleared area of the hill itself. However I took a GPS waypoint when I surveyed the site (and I am fairly confident that I did visit the correct site, not another platform in the area) and this helps me to precisely relocate the site. The area drawn is approximately twice the size that Willey described for this site, but the platform as I observed it is also larger than Willey’s description. It is possible that I surveyed and mapped an incorrect site, but I find this unlikely.

**V-141**
Time period(s): Early through Late Virú
Type: Civic
Size: 0.152 ha
Location: 8.3762° S, 78.6846° W
Description: This is a small pyramid mound located at the mouth of a large quebrada in the Huacapongo Valley (Willey 1953: 82, fig. 53). The site is surrounded by agricultural fields today and may also have been when it was occupied as abandoned irrigation canals of an indeterminate age are located above this site farther up the quebrada. Today a small irrigation canal runs along the south and west side of the mound but this canal ran immediately east of the mound when Willey surveyed it, and a separate canal is located approximately 30 m to the east adjacent to V-37, a Late Virú and Late Epoch site. It is not clear if either of these canals are associated with this sites or are more recent. Willey describes the rectangular mound as being constructed with earth, abodes, and rocks, with a summit extent of 14 m x 21 m. The summit is partially partitioned by rock walls and there is a small, lower eastern extension to the site. Willey notes that a large excavation had been made into the site but he has no information on this excavation. Willey’s map for the area (1953: fig. 53) shows an area of destroyed rock-walled houses approximately 50-100 m north of this site, but he does not make any mention of these houses and it is not possible to determine whether this is a residential area for this mound, or is related to any of the several nearby sites. Willey dates the construction of the site to the Early Virú Period with a Late Virú component, but the present seriation shows continual use throughout the entire Virú Period.

Willey’s description of the site is not enough to determine conclusively what type of site it was. The fact that it is a pyramid mound suggests that the structure itself was a small civic building, and the relatively large partitions on top of the site support this conclusion (presumably they divided the space into a small plaza and associated rooms), but these could also be later house foundations. It is also possible that this site was purely residential built on a mound to stay above the level of fields, but this is unlikely since most contemporary sites in Huacapongo are on the hills and dry quebrada floors, built above the limits of cultivation in order to free up arable land; there are several irrigation canals and a complex field system associated with the Huacas El Gallo and La Gallina (Initial/Guañape Period) located in the quebrada uphill from this site (Zoubek 1997), so this site likely was located in arable land when it was occupied. If the living area north of the mound is associated with this site then this mound should be classified as a civic-ceremonial centre, but without further research it is safest to call this site a generic civic building.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent

V-143

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú, Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.06 ha
Location: 8.3536° S, 78.7152° W

Description: This site is a small collection of connected rooms, three of which are approximately 3.5 m x 6 m and one of which is 7.5 m x 8 m (Willey 1953: 197, fig. 43). The site is located in a small western offshoot of the large quebrada located on the north side at the western end of the Huacapongo Valley. There are several house groups of varying size located on the floor and hillsides of this quebrada, including many that are visible on satellite imagery but were never mapped or described by Willey. Some of these are likely contemporary with V-143 but no ceramic collections were made at the sites closest to this group and these therefore cannot be
dated. It is possible that this site is essentially part of a town or village in the area but this cannot be confirmed without further fieldwork.

The house group has been partially destroyed by flooding, and several looter’s pits are located within the site. There are two walls located 14 m and 19 m south (downhill) of this site, one of which runs across the entire mouth of the quebrada. It is likely that these walls date to Late Epoch times, as the Chimú (La Plata in the original Virú chronology) were known for building such extensive walls (and there are several similar walls throughout Huacapongo and the Upper Virú Valley) and these walls, one of which appears to replace an older one, are likely not associated with the Virú occupation of this site.

Willey (1953: 198) dates this site to the Late Virú Period and Late Epoch but notes that an Early Virú component was also identified in the ceramic collection. Willey felt that the structures themselves dated to the later periods. The current dating scheme shows that this site was in fact occupied during the Early and Middle Virú Periods and was later reoccupied during the Late Epoch. Owing to their level of preservation I agree that the structures themselves date to the later occupation, but due to the limitations of my research this structure is drawn as the map for this site. Hints of destroyed room foundations or terraces occupying an area approximately twice the size of the extant structure do appear on satellite imagery, but without ground-truthing it is not possible to confirm whether these are earlier structures or are natural features. If the former, then the main structure of V-143 was built during the Late Epoch in the centre of the older Early and Middle Virú site.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Only the extant structure has been mapped but it is likely that this sits in the centre of the Virú-occupation of the site.

V-144, V-145
Time period(s): Early Virú, Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.306 ha
Location: 8.353° S, 78.7121° W
Description: These two sites are located adjacent to each other on a hill spur of the large quebrada at the western end of the north side of the Huacapongo Valley. Willey and Ford considered these separate sites and made separate ceramic collections at each, but they are clearly part of the same site. The site clearly was occupied and later re-occupied, however. Earlier Virú Period structures are much smaller and arranged more haphazardly than later structures and this can be seen on satellite imagery by comparison to nearby Virú Period sites (V-146, V-203) with no or very minimal Late Epoch occupations. Ford made one collection at V-144 and two at V-145 (archival notes). Collection A at V-145 was made on the lower southern area of the site, closer to V-144, and shows a small but distinct Early Virú component, possibly with a very minor Middle Virú occupation. Collection B was made farther north and uphill from V-144 to attempt to avoid collecting material that dated to the older occupation, but collection B also contained some Early Virú sherds. Based on Ford’s seriation and the nature of construction, Willey (1953: 77) dated V-144 to the Early Virú Period with a very minor Late Epoch occupation (both from late graves and contamination from V-145 uphill from V-144), and dated V-145 to the Late Epoch but with minor Early Virú Period contamination. Following the seriation methods outlined in chapter 4, V-144 dates entirely to the Early Virú Period while collection B at V-145
dates to both the Early and Middle Virú Periods, and to the Late Epoch, while collection A dates to the Late Epoch. Based on Willey’s and Ford’s descriptions for these sites and their occupation, I argue that V-145 does not in fact have a Middle Virú component. I conclude that V-145 is a Late Epoch site built partly over V-144 and draw the map of V-144 to accommodate this fact. V-144 thus dates purely to the Early Virú Period and V-145 is not mapped.

For V-144, Willey (1953: 77, fig. 15) describes 35 extant rooms built together in a cluster, but arranged irregularly in such a way that makes it clear that the community grew organically. Willey observed that the site contained rooms of varying sizes and suggested that this indicated a diversity of uses at the site such as habitation rooms, storage rooms, etc. I surveyed this site on November 8, 2010 and my description largely agrees with Willey’s. I did not a large amount of chipped lithic material but no ground stone tools or grinding stones. Chipped lithic material consisted of both black basalt, a common toolstone throughout the valley, and higher-quality cherts that I am not familiar with. Some rooms had a small amount of shell, indicating at least some trade with the coast. Some rooms had banquettes and this site clearly had a mixture of domestic and non-domestic functions, and likely was a true village. The site has a good view of the valley neck and the Huacapongo Valley.

The site is one of several similar clusters of rooms on the rocky lower flanks of this large quebrada. It is located just above a large wall that crosses the quebrada, but it is unlikely that this wall dates to the Early Virú occupation of this site.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Note that the map for this site has been drawn to encompass the southern portion of V-145 as well, as that site clearly dates to later periods than V-144, but was built over part of V-144 (see discussion above).

V-146
Time period(s): Early Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.958 ha
Location: 8.3526° S, 78.7107° W

Description: This is another site in the westernmost quebrada on the north side of the Huacapongo Valley, built on the upper part of the quebrada on the hill spurs that run down from the Andean foothills to the north, and built above the rocky floor of the quebrada. There is a great deal of construction in this area with rooms climbing up the narrowing valleys of the quebrada, but Willey (1953: 77) apparently did not include the majority of this construction in his description of this site. Willey describes V-146 as being made up of approximately 25 extant foundations of small, rectangular or rounded rooms, arranged haphazardly. These are apparently clustered together on terraces (to account for the gradual hill slope here) and the community clearly grew organically as rooms were added to the cluster. Willey dated the site to the Early Virú Period with a small Late Epoch contamination from nearby later sites, and Ford observed that Late Epoch sherds at the site came from later burials made into the site. The present seriation dates this site securely to the Early Virú Period.

Willey never drew a map of this site specifically nor did he include it on the map of nearby sites (1953: fig. 15), but based on the master map of all Virú Valley sites, it is located just to the north-northeast of V-144/V-145. Satellite imagery shows at least 10 clusters of rooms in
this general vicinity, each consisting of at least 10 rooms and some containing several dozen. Some of these clusters are separated only by flood channels that cut through a larger cluster, but some were built between 5-30 m apart from other clusters and local topography played a role in some of this. Based on Willey’s description of 25 rooms to this site he is describing a single one of these clusters, but it is not possible to determine which one. All of these rooms appear quite similar on current satellite imagery and it is not possible to separate the clusters into different ages, unlike with nearby V-145 which is clearly of a very different construction style than earlier sites in the area. Ford (archives) identified a small collection of Late Epoch ceramics gathered from burials at this site but also noted that stones were taken from this site to construct nearby Late Epoch sites, citing V-145 and V-147 specifically (note that V-147 is located in a different quebrada. Presumably one of the nearby sites was originally labelled V-147 but was then changed to another name, or V-147 had been assigned a site number but was later excluded from Willey’s analysis). Both Ford and Willey (1953: 77) observe that Early Virú construction in the area can be discerned from Late Epoch construction by the amount of weathering or patina present on the stones used in construction. This cannot be discerned on current satellite imagery. Willey refers to Late Epoch sites dotting the quebrada near this site but does not identify these sites or elaborate on them. Taken together, this means that it is not possible to determine specifically which cluster of rooms Willey referred to as V-146, and it is likely that the Early Virú component of this site is in fact much larger than Willey described, but given that all of these clusters are formed together into what appears to be a large town of similar construction, I map the entire site as one. There are other nearby structures separate from this and other described sites in the area, but I do not include these in my map as I have no information of their ceramic components.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. See site description above for total extent of site mapped, and potential issues in determining the overall extent of this site.

V-149 (Huaca El Gallo)
Time period(s): Initial Period (Guañape or pre-Guañape) and Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Civic-Ceremonial Centre
Size: 1.695 ha
Location: 8.3758° S, 78.6743° W
Description: Huaca El Gallo and the adjacent Huaca La Gallina (V-148) are some of the most interesting sites in the entire Virú Valley. The two mounds and associated structures are located at the mouth of a large quebrada on the north side of the Huacapongo Valley. The two mounds are separated by approximately 225 m with walls, canals, and possibly structures lying in between, and a large drainage from El Niño flooding has also cut between the two sites. Each mound is partially destroyed and they are heavily looted. Willey (1953: 140, 210) dated the actual structure of V-149 to the Late Virú Period with a secure Middle Virú component on part of the site, while he dated V-148 to the Late Epoch but with some evidence of an Early Virú component. Zoubek (1997, 2000) excavated at the two mounds however and showed that they were actually much older and were built during the Initial Period of the north coast (which roughly corresponds to the Guañape Period in Virú, although the Guañape Period is primarily associated with the Cupisnique style, dating to the Early Horizon of the north coast chronology). There is also a complex irrigation system due north of and uphill from the sites, and a large abandoned irrigation
canal runs east-west along the base of a large hill for at least several hundred metres and this canal runs across the top of V-148/V-149 (Zoubek 1997). The architecture of the mounds and associated sunken plazas and other features are all common to the Initial Period and Zoubek’s investigations at the site should be consulted for a full description of the sites and their dating schemes. I surveyed this site on November 9, 2010, but my descriptions do not add anything to Willey’s or Zoubek’s.

Despite their early age, Ford’s collections at V-148 and especially V-149 do have significant ceramic components from later periods and very little associated with the Guañape or Early Virú Periods, as should be expected given the very early age of the sites. For V-149, Willey and Ford made three separate large ceramic collections from around the mound and associated structures and other features, and two of these dated securely to the Late Virú Period while one dated to Middle Virú; my own seriation agrees with this site showing evidence of Middle and Late Virú occupation, as well as evidence of continued use into the Late Epoch. I therefore argue that V-149 was built in the Initial Period and was not used during Early Virú times but was later reoccupied in the Middle Virú Period and beyond. Exactly what the nature of this reoccupation was (i.e. burials, residences built on top of the mound, or re-use as a civic/ceremonial space) is not clear, nor is it clear how extensive the Middle Virú occupation was. Willey (1953: 212-213) noted several looted burials throughout V-149 but all corporate ware ceramics date to Late Virú and the Late Epoch and it is unlikely, though still possible, that the Middle Virú occupation was entirely a cemetery. Although Willey (1953: 213) says that the Middle Virú collection came from around a smaller mound north of the main one, the present seriation shows that two of the three collections at this site date to Middle Virú. Because of this uncertainty, I map the entirety of V-149 between the large drainage canal to the west, an outer retaining wall to the east, the south side of the main mound itself (which is surrounded by the same retaining wall), and a canal immediately north of the smaller mound.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent.

V-150
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.043 ha
Location: 8.354° S, 78.7121° W
Description: This is a small structure on the sloping floor of the Tomaval Quebrada. The site consists of two extant 5 m x 11 m rooms, each with banquettas, on adjacent terraces, though there are traces of destroyed rooms (Willey 1953: 198). The site is located near several other contemporary sites in this quebrada, and is approximately 100 m south/downslope of V-144. Willey dated the site to both the Early and Late Virú Periods and dated the structures to the latter period using no clear criteria. The current seriation shows that this site was in fact in continual use during both the Early and Middle Virú Periods but has no Late Virú occupation.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent

V-162 (Huaca de la Cruz)
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 7.695 ha
Location: 8.429° S, 78.7744° W

Description: This is a large oval-shaped residential settlement that rises gradually to a height of 15 m above the surrounding fields. Willey (1953: 123) describes it as being one of the best-known and most heavily-looted sites in the Virú Valley. Bennett (1939) and Strong and Evans (1952; Strong 1947) excavated at this site and their descriptions should be consulted; it is not necessary to go into great detail here. Strong and Evans dated the site to the Middle Virú Period with a later Late Virú re-occupation. Bennett (1939: 39-50) recovered Late Epoch (Tomaval and La Plata period) burials at the site. It is likely that this site was continuously occupied through Middle and Late Virú, while the Late Epoch burials may be intrusive. Ford (1949) did not make a ceramic collection from this site and I date the site to these same periods.

Willey (1953: 123) describes the site as being 420 m long and 260 m wide. Bennett (1939: 29) felt that the site was built on a sand dune and was not wholly artificial, bearing similarity to the nearby sites of Taitacantin (V-235) and Huaca Larga (V-238). However excavations by him and by Strong and Evans (1952) nevertheless show deep cultural stratigraphy and adobe structures dating to the Middle and Late Virú Periods. Bennett (1939: 29) described three sectors at the site. I visited this site on October 22, 2010 and it is difficult to discern these sectors because modern houses of the Virú Puente community surround all but the highest part of the site, and a large water tank is built at the highest point of the site. This water tank has extensively eroded the site in places and buried pipes must run off from it. Bennett (1939: 29) noted extensive evidence of burning in part of the site and, in some cases, ash refuse up to two metres thick; this is likely due to Colonial Period activity on the site.

Interestingly, Strong and Evans (1953; see also Strong 1947) excavated a richly-adorned Moche burial at this site, which they dubbed the Tomb of the Warrior Prince. This person was buried with objects that appear to be true Moche (in the sense of being similar to objects found at Huaca de la Luna), rather than Huancaco, the Late Virú corporate ware that developed out of Middle Virú negative styles but was made to emulate the Moche style (Bourget 2004, 2010; see also discussion in chapter 3). While this is interesting and important for understanding the political developments that took place as the Middle Virú Period came to a close and the Late Virú Period began, they are not relevant for my purposes here.

Although Huaca de la Cruz was used as a cemetery in later periods, its Middle Virú occupation appears to be entirely residential. This is a large site that housed a large population. Its location in the middle Virú Valley (it is very close to the Panamerican Highway today) and near the river is similar to other large residential settlements in this area suggests an extensive population in the middle valley. The top of the mound affords a good view of the castillos and of Mochan (V-240), a nearby large civic-ceremonial structure, but this may not have been the case when the densely-clustered houses were built atop it during its principle occupation.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The location of this site is well-known and it is easily-identifiable on satellite imagery. Strong and Evans (1952: fig. 27) map the site; this allows its full extent to be discerned, as much of the site today is occupied by modern houses.

V-169
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic  
Size: 0.117 ha  
Location: 8.4289° S, 78.7925° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 153) considers this small site to be a pyramid mound because it is steep-sided and rectangular; for these reasons I consider it to be a civic building, that is a site with civic/ceremonial space but no attached residential sector. This site is located on the floor of the lower valley approximately 600 m south of the Virú River a little over a kilometre downstream from Virú Puente, where the Panamerican Highway crosses the river. The mound is 4 m high with a well-defined summit platform and a base of 7 m x 17 m. Willey noted no adobes and suspected that the site was built of tapia. Willey dated the site to Middle Virú only and the present seriation agrees with this.  
Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey does not describe the exact location of this site so its location must be derived from his master map of all valley sites. There are several possible mounds in this area, all slightly larger than what Willey describes, so I have mapped the one closest to the point as it appears on the master valley map.

V-170  
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch  
Type: Midden  
Size: 1.052 ha  
Location: 8.4315° S, 78.7977° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 79, 201) very briefly describes this site as a midden on top of a sand dune on the valley floor in the lower part of the valley, approximately 400 m south of the river and 500 m southwest of V169. The area of midden accumulation has a diameter of approximately 100 m (Willey 1953: 201), but the dune itself is apparently larger. Although Willey noted looter’s pits he did not observe any evidence of burials but there are two sherds of Virú Negative here, the corporate ware style—likely primarily a burial ware—diagnostic of the Middle Virú Period but rare throughout the valley. Willey dated this site to the Early and Late Virú periods only but reseriation shows continual use throughout from Early Virú through the Late Epoch. The presence of some Guañape sherds at the site also hint at a deeply-buried Guañape occupation which, if confirmed, would indicate that this site was in use for the entire Prehispanic Virú Valley sequence; Guañape-style sherds remain a minor type in the Early Virú Period, however, so these sherds may not date that early.  
Mapping accuracy: Good. As with all middens it is difficult to identify this site on satellite imagery and the master valley map is the only location reference for this site but since this site is located on an isolated dune within agricultural fields its location can be established with confidence. However, this dune—which is covered with modern structures—is approximately twice the size that Willey described for this site. Therefore I only map the central part of the site, an area of approximately 100 m in diameter.

V-175  
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic-Ceremonial Centre
Size: 2.337 ha
Location: 8.4352° S, 78.8043° W
Description: This is a mid-sized civic ceremonial complex built on a sand dune in the lower valley some 500 m south of the river. Although Willey (1953: 147) described this site as a complex, interesting site worthy of future excavation he only briefly described it and did not map it specifically. The site is approximately 100 m x 200 m in extent with three small pyramid mounds, the largest of which rises 6 m above the level of the site, while the smallest rises 3.5 m high. Willey noted scattered adobes in places and presumably the mounds themselves were built of adobe but it is not clear what type of structures were built on the natural dune between the mounds, or how dense these were. The site was covered by scrub growth when Willey surveyed it but today is cleared with scattered buildings built on the northeastern part and dense structures on the southwestern part. The dune itself is larger than the site dimensions that Willey described and extends for over one kilometer northeast to southwest (although it has been ploughed over in two places). It is difficult to determine which part Willey described, but it is apparently the northeastern area.

I surveyed this site on November 4, 2010 and found some conflict with Willey’s description. The site appears to be larger than what Willey described with a mixture of natural dune with apparently very little (or no) habitation refuse, and several artificial mounds some of which were difficult to survey or determine whether they were natural or not due to modern use of the dune. Furthermore, the only mound that fit Willey’s description of the northeastermost, largest pyramid mound at this site was actually a separate mound not physically connected to this site and located some 50 m to the northeast. This mound contained artifacts of a similar style to the rest of the site, consisting primarily of domestic ware sherds although some Moche/Huancaco-style corporate ware sherds were seen, likely from intrusive burials at the site. I map the site as encompassing the main body of the dune and this separate mound to the north as it appears to be associated with this mound. Although evidence of habitation is scant there is ample room for and some evidence of a domestic occupation at the site alongside the clear civic function of the 3-4 pyramid mounds at the site, and therefore this site can be considered a civic-ceremonial complex.

Willey securely dated the site entirely to the Middle Virú Period and the present seriation agrees with this. Both in Ford’s collection and my own survey there are a few corporate ware sherds diagnostic of Late Virú and the Late Epoch but these are surely from intrusive burials and do not date a true occupation of the site. Note that there is an Instituto Nacional de Cultura (INC) sign at this site listing it as “VV.105.3=4.” This sign is likely related to an archaeological project conducted in the 1990s as part of the construction of the Chavi-Mochic irrigation project in the valley, but information from this study is not available. Most sites labelled by this project appear to refer to sites that were not mapped or described by Willey, but this site appears to be an exception.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Although Willey did not map this site specifically or describe its precise location there are few sand dunes of any size in this part of the valley, and I surveyed this site and found it to be largely congruent with Willey’s basic description; I am therefore confident that I have relocated the correct site on satellite imagery. That said, the site appears to be considerably larger than what Willey described so any potential error is in size, not location.
V-176/V-177
Time period(s): Early Virú and Middle Virú
Type: Civic; Residential
Size:
- V-176: 4.32 ha
- V-177: 2.503 ha
Location: 8.3645° S, 78.6893° W
Description: This is one of the most interesting sites in the Huacapongo Valley and was clearly a significant site during Early Virú times. This site deserves a full study complete with detailed mapping of the entire site and excavation. This site can be considered a full town, located in a defensive location and complete with civic/ceremonial space, evidence of the production of domestic and defensive crafts, extensive residential sectors.

Willey (1953: 72-74, fig. 14) labelled V-176 and V-177 as two separate sites but noted that they likely functioned as one. It is not clear why Willey listed these as being separate in the first place, but the two sites as he mapped them are clearly the central and most complex portions of an extensive site. The site sits on the steep eastern arms of the Niño Quebrada and is backed by the Cerro Niño range to the north and a large hill spur to the east. This eastern hill spur has very similar structures on it but Willey did not map or describe these and they are separate enough to be considered a separate, though likely contemporary, site. The central portion of this site, that which Willey mapped, lies approximately 175-200 m northeast of and 50-60 m higher than the present-day limits of irrigation in this area, although there are relic irrigation canals of unknown age reaching as high as 75-90 m northeast of and 15 m higher than the current fields. Interestingly, there are few ruins below these canals and extensive ruins above them, suggesting that V-176/V-177 was built to be outside of the limits of excavation. The extent of ruins reaches down to these relic canals and as far as 275 m northeast of and 75 m higher than the present-day limits of irrigation.

There are scattered rooms and terraces around this hill and adjoining hill spurs but since these have not been surveyed and are far from the central part of V-176/V-177 I do not include these as part of this site. I map the main cluster of sites in two separate parts because Ford and Willey’s collection from V-176 dates only to the Early Virú Period while that from V-177 shows a continuation of use from Early Virú to Middle Virú. I keep these separate to show that less of the site was occupied during the Middle Virú Period. The full occupational history of this site would make for a very worthwhile research project.

Willey (1953: 73) describes the V-176 sector of the site as being a series of terraced structures 40 m x 70 m in extent with a series of 15 conjoined rooms with an extent of 18 m x 29 m on the uppermost two terraces. These rooms range in size from 2 m x 3 m to 7 m x 8 m and one room has a banquette. The rooms on the lower terraces are largely destroyed. Willey noted that potsherds and domestic refuse were abundant at the site and I noted during my survey of the site on November 10, 2010 that each room had an in situ grinding stone, and that chipped lithic tools and mortar stones were common. These rooms were clearly domestic in nature. Willey felt that the terraced houses were common to the Early Virú Period but that the cluster of adjoined
rooms was unusual for this period and felt that this was a precursor of the structure type, which became common later.

V-177, as Willey described it, was a long terrace just up slope from V-176. The terrace varies in width from 7-12 m and is 150 m long with internal room divisions along the length of the terrace and large rooms at either end. The larger room, on the eastern end, measures 18 m x 22 m and has a 4 m wide structure that Willey described as a banquette on the north wall. This structure is approximately 1 m higher than the floor of the room and because of this and its width I argue that this is a platform instead of a banquette. Indeed there are apparently stairs or a path leading up to this platform and the upper wall of the platform has 2-3 partially-destroyed wall niches. I argue that this room is a small plaza with platform and has a clear civic/ceremonial function. The smaller room on the west end of this terrace does not have as clear of a function but Willey (1953: 74) hypothesized that the rooms on either end of the terrace “may have been community religious or political structures.”

Willey’s description of the site is only partial since the house terraces cover a far larger area that that which Willey described and apparently visited. There is a second long terrace with structures 45 m southwest of and 20 m downhill from the long terrace described as V-177, but this second terrace is not as well preserved. Farther downhill, bisecting the house terraces below the central part of the site, there is a long wall that originally ran across the entire quebrada and another similar wall at the bottom of this site; these walls likely date to the Late Epoch, but all other features in the area appear to be associated with the central area of V-176/V-177. My single day of surveying here is not enough to describe the entire site in detail but I will provide some more inferences gained from this survey.

The site is clearly built in a defensive location. Its location on the steep sides of a hill make it difficult to access and the central portion would be particularly inaccessible if there were defenders blocking any path up to it. The two long terraces at the site also serve the function of being walls that could block assailants. From the central portion of the site an observer has excellent views of the western portion of the Huacapongo Valley, the confluence of the Huacapongo and Virú/Carabamba Rivers, the Early Virú sector of Castillo de Sarraque, a pass to the south margin of the lower valley that runs east of Cerro Sarraque, and Castillo San Juan. The large hill spur to the east blocks the upstream view of the Huacapongo Valley but this hill spur also has terraces that were likely contemporary with V-176/V-177 so this site was located in a position to be highly defendable and able to keep track of movement through the valley. During my survey of the site I observed three broken doughnut-shaped ground stone tools that are consistent with porras (mace heads), although these could also have been ground stone hoes. One of these broke during production indicating that these stones were produced at this site. In addition to this, I observed one bola stone. Taken together, this site clearly had a defensive function.

Unlike Early Virú fortifications in the lower valley such as Cerro Bitín (V-80), which were hilltop retreats without regular residential habitation, V-176/V-177 was clearly also a residential site. The numerous house terraces contained abundant ceramic, ground stone, and chipped lithic refuse. I noted one piece of scoria, or ceramic kiln discard material, indicating that ceramics were produced at this site although no kilns were observed. On one of the highest house terraces I observed a large sunken tinaja cooking pot with a mouth diameter of approximately 60 cm. Its overall size was impossible to measure since it was buried to its neck in sand but it was likely at least as deep as its mouth was wide. Some rooms may have had storage bins and one
room at V-176 with a large in situ grinding stone opens onto several other rooms and may have been some sort of communal kitchen. This site was clearly primarily a residential one built in a defensive location and with defensive features.

In sum, I argue that this site was a town or large village. The adjoined rooms in the central portion of the site (that which Willey mapped as V-176) may have been the home of the ruling family of the town. Just above this structure and likely connected to it was the long terrace (V-177) with clear civic/ceremonial space, and structures along this terrace may have belonged to elite members of the community. Beyond these structures the site contained many house terraces and clearly held a large community.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Note that Willey (1953: fig. 14) only mapped the central portion of the site and called them two separate sites (V-176 and V-177). The ceramic collection from V-176 dates solely to the Early Virú Period while that from V-177 dates to both Early and Middle Virú. I have kept this site as two separate points and two separate polygons and make the assumption that only half the site continued to be used into the Middle Virú Period. The V-176 structure and everything downhill from it are mapped as V-176 while the V-177 structure and everything uphill from it are mapped as V-177. Note that Ford and Willey only made ceramic collections from the central structures of the site so without further fieldwork to establish the occupational sequence of the site these assumptions are tenuous.

V-182

Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Civic
Size: 0.067 ha
Location: 8.3672° S, 78.6487° W

Description: This is a small mound on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley at about the mid-point of the valley. Willey (1953: 286, fig. 68) describes this site as being on a terrace of the hills—with some relic agricultural features on the terrace, which lies below a major canal, but Willey of unsure whether these were Prehispanic or not—and overlooking a bluff. The site itself is a rectangular stone-walled enclosure of 21 m x 24 m, rising 1 m in height, and with a central mound (11 m x 14.5 m) that rises an additional 2 m. There are some interior rooms on the structure including possibly some on the flat top of the higher mound. There are some nearby sites of unknown age (Willey did not describe or survey these) but there are fewer sites here than on the larger quebradas farther west. Nevertheless, given its relatively complex architecture and its location this site is clearly more than a simple residential structure. It may be a local huaca or it could be elite housing. Without more specific information I give this site a general civic structure designation.

Willey dated the site to the Late Epoch (Tomaval Period) but the modest ceramic component shows that the site was also occupied during the Middle and Late Virú Periods. The Middle Virú component was likely small, however.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 68) mapped this site specifically and there is a structure that corresponds closely to it located very near where Willey showed this site on the master valley map. There are a few incongruities between Willey’s map and description and this site as it appears on satellite imagery but I am confident that I have relocated the correct site.
There are a small number of local ruins that also vaguely fit the description for this one, however.

**V-183/V-184**

Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch  
Type: Residential  
Size:  
\[ V-183: 0.109 \text{ ha} \]  
\[ V-184: 0.137 \text{ ha} \]  
Location: 8.3635° S, 78.6925° W

Description: This site is located on the floor of the Niño Quebrada just above the present-day limits of agriculture. Willey (1953: 267, fig. 62) divided the site into two with V-183 being on the west side of a flooding drainage that cut through the site, and V-184 being on the east, but he described them as a single site. The area immediately south of this site was apparently not cultivated when Willey conducted his survey and he noted that this site lies just north of a major irrigation canal associated with agricultural terraces; Willey mentioned that sites V-35 and V-36 (V-35 has a Middle Virú component) sit on this same terrace farther to the west but it is not clear whether or not Willey implied that V-183/V-184 was associated with these sites and terraces.  

The V-183 sector of the site is much better preserved than the V-184 sector; given the size of rooms in this structure (the rooms are larger than any found at purely Early Virú sites in the area) and the nature of its preservation it is likely younger than V-184, but the structure was built over an older site. Willey (1953: 267) notes that some features found at the site are generally associated with structures from later periods. Because of its younger age it is not necessary to describe this structure in detail.  

The V-184 sector of the site is poorly-preserved and it is difficult to discern its layout or the size of its rooms but Willey (1953: 269) observed that there were several large rooms. Willey also noted the presence of a small knoll of 1-2 m height that he considered to be a small midden with later structures built on it. Taken together, the features of V-183/V-184 show it to be a residential site typical of those found on the quebrada floors throughout the Virú and Huacapongo Valleys.  

Ford's ceramic collection for V-183 shows two components for this site, one dating to the Early Virú Period and another dating to the Late Epoch (Appendix A, Table 1); Willey dated this site similarly. Willey also dated the V-184 sector of the site to both the Early Virú Period and Late Epoch but the current seriation sees continual use from Early Virú through the Late Epoch. Willey considered the V-184 structures to date to the Late Epoch, same as the V-183 structures, but they are very poorly-preserved compared to V-183, although both sectors show evidence of flooding damage. It is more likely that the V-184 sector of the site is older than V-183. Taken together, this site appears to have been larger in the Early Virú Period, decreased in size through the Middle and Late Virú Periods, and grew again during the Late Epoch. I map these sites separately to show this change in size.  

There are scattered other similar structures elsewhere on the quebrada floor within a few hundred metres of this site but Willey did not survey most of these sites and their age is unknown. The site is located approximately 350 m to the west of the central area of V-176/V-177
(and less than 200 m from the lower sectors of that site), however. It is likely that this quebrada had dense Early Virú occupations and modest, but still significant, Middle Virú occupations. Fieldwork is needed to confirm this.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The two sectors of the site are mapped separately to maintain data continuity with ceramic collections and to reflect the decreased size of the site in the Middle Virú Period.

**V-185 (Huacapongo Mound)**

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú, Late Epoch  
Type: Civic  
Size: 0.188 ha  
Location: 8.3753° S, 78.6516° W

Description: The Huacapongo Mound is a small isolated pyramid mound on the floor of the Huacapongo Valley, just south of the town of Huacapongo itself (Willey described the site as being west of the town but his master map showed it being south of the town, and there is a mound in this area that corresponds closely to that which Willey described). Willey (1953: 84, fig. 17) describes this mound as having a height of 6 m, with a flat summit of 13 m x 22 m, and with an overall extent of 37 m x 40 m. Two levels of terraces surround the mound itself on the northwest and southwest sides and presumably once entirely surrounded the mound (the terraces that Willey described have been destroyed by recent agricultural activity surrounding the mound). I surveyed this site on September 30, 2010 but have little to add to Willey’s description other than to note that the terraces have been destroyed and the stone used to build them piled on the mound itself.

The mound itself is built of a stone wall terraced in three steps with earth fill. There are two facing 2 m-wide staircases on either side of the long axis of the mound, leading to the summit. The summit is well-preserved with few looter’s pits. There is no evidence of internal room divisions on the mound summit; it was a fairly large, flat platform. Given this, and the stairs leading to the top, it is clear that this site had a general civic/ceremonial function rather than a residential one. The lower terraces surrounding the mound could have been residential space but there is no evidence of this and this is unlikely; the mound had a civic function.

There are two large stone walls that run out from the mound to the southwest and northwest. Willey notes that at least one of these appeared to run to another mound 200 m from V-185, but he did not describe this other mound or make a ceramic collection there. I visited this mound and it appears to be similar to, though smaller than, V-185, but I am not able to securely date this site and must leave it off of my analysis. Given their connection by a stone wall it is likely that these mounds and possibly others in the area were contemporary and functioned together, possibly as a large civic/ceremonial complex or as a means of dividing agricultural lands for separate cults or communities. Obviously this is a very tenuous inference but it is a hypothesis that should be tested to better understand the nature of civic or community space in Early Virú society.

Ford (1949) made two separate ceramic collections here and Willey (1953: 84) dated this site to the Early Virú Period with a later reoccupation during the Late Epoch. The present seriation largely agrees with this but there is also a small Middle Virú ceramic component. This
site was likely built during the Early Virú Period and remained in use in Middle Virú, then was abandoned and reoccupied during the Late Epoch, likely by a small residential population.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent

V-186

Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential; Funerary
Size: 0.134 ha
Location: 8.3853° S, 78.6497° W

Description: This site sits on the lowest and northernmost extent of a hill spur on the southern side of the Huacapongo Valley, about mid-way along the east-west length of the valley. This hill spur and one to the east form two arms that mark the entrance to a narrow, but deep rocky quebrada; the lowest reaches of this quebrada are today farmed but this is likely relatively recent. V-186 is the only site in this part of the southern Huacapongo Valley that Willey mapped or described but there are clearly numerous sites in this region, although Prehispanic occupation of this part of Huacapongo appears to be less-dense than on the northern part of the valley owing to the smaller quebradas and steeper hills to the south (most archaeological sites in Huacapongo are built on the floors of the rocky quebradas or on the hill spurs bordering these quebradas). The quebrada just west of V-186 has several ruins in it including a possible geoglyph and a long wall that runs up the quebrada, crosses the crest of the hill between this quebrada and one on the Chao Valley to the south, then cuts through that quebrada and across a very large but sparsely-occupied rocky quebrada that forms one arm of the Chao Valley. While this feature appears as a wall on satellite imagery it may in fact be a road to Chao, or both a wall and a road. Its age is unknown but similar features are thought to date to the Late Epoch. There is also a very similar site to V-186 on the western arm of the quebrada; I visited this site in 2009 when attempting to locate V-186 but other than noting the similarities between it and Willey’s description for V-186, I am unable to make any inferences about that site and it is not included in this analysis.

Willey (1953: 233) describes V-186 itself as a heavily-looted cemetery dating to Late Virú. The site sits on and around a semi-isolated hill with a diameter of 30 m, and with a canal running along the southern side of the valley and past the foot of this hill (this canal is in use today but apparently not when Willey conducted his survey). Willey thought that the hilltop had been built up partly because of a retaining wall at the west side, and there were some possible house foundations at the foot of the hill. Willey was not sure when these structures dated to, but he noted Early Virú sherds on top of and around the hill, with Late Virú sherds dating the burials. The present seriation shows instead that the site was in continual use from Early Virú through the Late Epoch, but the large number (64) of Huancaco/Moche-style corporate ware sherds confirms the later date of the burials. There are also two Castillo White-on-Red corporate ware sherds here, found only at one other site in Virú (V-73). Since the burials clearly date to Late Virú and possibly also the Late Epoch I argue that this site had a residential occupation in Early and Middle Virú times and then was used as a cemetery. It is unclear whether there is a civic component at the site so to be conservative I consider it residential.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey’s (1953: 233) description of the site is very basic and he does not map it specifically. On his master valley map he shows only one site in this region when in fact there are several. However there is a hill with looter’s pits that closely fits Willey’s
description near where he mapped the site on the master map and I consider this to be the correct site. Available satellite imagery in this part of Huacapongo is poor so the overall extent and nature of the site are difficult to establish so I map the entire small hill.

**Upper Huacapongo Cluster (V-187, V-188, V-189, V-190, V-198, V-199)**

Time period(s):
- V-187: Early Virú through Late Epoch
- V-188: Early and Middle Virú
- V-189: Middle Virú through Late Epoch
- V-190: Middle Virú through Late Epoch
- V-198: Early Virú through Late Epoch
- V-199: Early and Middle Virú

Type: Civic (some mounds are civic and residential)

Size:
- V-187: 0.129 ha
- V-188: 0.069 ha
- V-189: 0.047 ha
- V-190: 0.046 ha
- V-198: 0.224 ha
- V-199: 0.109 ha

Location: 8.3663° S, 78.6352° W (V-187); 8.367° S, 78.6349° W (V-188); 8.3671° S, 78.633° W (V-189); 8.3669° S, 78.6323° W (V-190); 8.3706° S, 78.6338° W (V-198); 8.3731° S, 78.6354° W (V-199)

General Description: This cluster of at least six mounds with Early or Middle Virú components and at least as many later or undocumented mounds is located on the floor of the upper Huacapongo Valley, near where the Huacapongo River itself makes a 90° north and runs into the mountains. Because there are several structures that are similar in age and form located within 500 m of each other I have decided to describe these as a cluster, briefly describing each individual site with an Early and/or Middle Virú component below. Erosion is heavy in this area and Willey notes extensive damage to some sites, while other sites may be altogether destroyed. Not all sites within this cluster are solely mound sites but several are. Two sites within the cluster, V-191 and V-197, have extensive residential areas but these sites date securely to the Late Epoch and the sites with Early and Middle Virú components appear to be largely or wholly pyramid mounds and thus likely have a civic function, even if some also have a residential function. I describe the entire cluster together primarily all sites share the same geography and likely had similar functions, but it is unclear if they acted together during their Early and Middle Virú phases, formed part of one large site, or were competing centres located in the same place.

The cluster is located at the confluence of the dry Rio Seco to the east and the Huacapongo River—forming a large rocky quebrada with several undocumented sites—and 200-300 m southwest of the hills that form the eastern margin of the upper Huacapongo River. These hills may have formed a sort of border between the large, wide valley of the lower Huacapongo
River and the narrow valley of the upper Huacapongo River which was essentially in the \textit{yungas} zone and no longer part of the Virú Valley system as defined by Willey, although Willey’s study area did not include upper Huacapongo. There is a citadel-like hilltop fortification and at least two residential sites on a semi-isolated hill (the fortification is approximately 140 m above the surrounding fields) approximately 700 m north of the mound cluster; the location of this fortification at the natural boundary between the upper and lower Huacapongo Valleys is conspicuous but as these sites were not surveyed by Willey and are of unknown age this inference is very tenuous.

The dry Rio Seco Quebrada east of this cluster has evidence of several large habitation sites or agricultural terraces of unknown age. The lower and western parts of this quebrada are today farmed but apparently the area east of the Upper Huacapongo Cluster was not farmed when Willey conducted his survey, and agricultural land is slowly encroaching on this quebrada. This quebrada appears to carry water more regularly than most of the dry quebradas as water channels are more common here, there is considerably more vegetation than other quebradas in Huacapongo, and there are some structures that appear to be llama corrals suggesting that this quebrada served as a route to the highlands. Still, the quebrada did not carry regular water; evidence of this is a series of two irrigation canals that run several hundred metres up the quebrada but draw their water from the upper branch of the Huacapongo River, which does have regular water flow. These canals are of unknown age but the lower one is clearly older than the higher one, which appears to be in current use. There is a series of residential or agricultural terraces between these two canals, indicating the changing nature of settlement in this part of the valley. The age of these terraces and canals is unknown, however, and Willey did not describe them.

The geographic location of this cluster is interesting but at present there is not enough data to really understand the nature of the cluster. If the upper Huacapongo River was socio-politically separated from the populous lower valley and the Virú Valley itself then it is possible that this cluster was located to be a sort of border between the \textit{yungas} zone and the Huacapongo region. Alternatively, this may have been a safe, neutral ground where populations living in the hills in the area could have come together for civic and ceremonial purposes. However there is no single large civic/ceremonial space here, but rather several fairly monumental structures of very limited size without apparent connections between them. Given this, I think it most likely that these were central meeting sites for several autonomous but related communities in the area who felt safe coming together to the same place, but still met on their own. This, of course, is a hypothesis that needs to be tested.

In sum, it appears that the sites with the earliest occupation, during the Early Virú Period, were built on pyramid mounds that were likely of wholly artificial construction. All of these sites were still in use at least during the Middle Virú Period, with some in use through to the Late Epoch. At present it is not possible to determine whether these sites were added to significantly during the later periods or if later occupations were superficial. Sites without an Early Virú component in this cluster were built on the valley floor. The construction of Early and Middle Virú sites on artificial pyramid mounds indicates a degree of monumentality and civic function, but at least some of these were residences. It is possible that they were civic/ceremonial space that were later used as residences, but it is possible that they were wholly residential but built up to protect from the very destructive floods that appear to have occurred relatively frequently in this part of the valley. As always, further research can clarify this.
Site Descriptions:

**V-187:** This is a high (8.5 m) pyramid mound of limited extent (ca. 35 m diameter) made from rock walls and earth fill with *tapia* room or tomb walls located on the summit (Willey 1953: 86, fig. 54). The summit has been extensively damaged by looting activity. I surveyed the mound on October 1, 2010 and noted abundant domestic refuse. Late Virú and Late Epoch graves had been placed at the site as shown by the large number of late corporate ware ceramics at the site but there was also one Gallinazo Broad-Line Incised sherd, a diagnostic corporate ware of the Middle Virú Period and rare in the valley. Late domestic ware sherds are also common. The monumentality of this site gives it a clear civic function but it also likely held residences at times as indicated by rooms on the summit and abundant domestic ware sherds at the site, although these residences likely date to the later occupations of the site as similar structures of Early and Middle Virú age in the area did not have residences on them. Still, I consider this a civic building with residential space. Willey dated the structure to Early Virú and the graves to Late Virú, but I see continual use from Early Virú through the Late Epoch.

**V-188:** This mound is located 50 m south of V-187 and is a similar rock-and-earth structure with a flat summit (Willey 1953: 86, fig. 54). The structure has been significantly damaged by flooding, which has destroyed approximately half of the mound (the mound lies just north of the main channel of the dry river that meets the Huacapongo River within the cluster). Willey thought that the mound was originally 15 m x 15 m and 2-3 m high. I was unable to fully survey this mound because a modern house sits on top of it (there was no such structure when Willey surveyed the site). Willey noted possibly residential foundations on the summit of the mound. I therefore consider this site to be both a civic and residential structure.

**V-189:** This is a well laid-out rock-walled structure of 16 m x 27.5 m, located approximately 200 m east of V-188. V-191 (not described here) and V-190 lie a short distance to the northeast and southeast, respectively. The site consists of four main rooms and four small storage rooms, with a corridor between two of the rooms (Willey 1953: 269, fig. 54). Each main room contains a small rock-and-earth platform. There is also a small *tapia* wall in one room. Willey notes that there is only one door leading out of the structure but each room has doors that connect to other rooms, so essentially this was a single house or building. Willey dates the site solely to the Late Epoch (Tomaval Period) despite a small number of earlier sherds. The present seriation shows that the site was in fact occupied from Middle Virú through to the Late Epoch, but the building itself almost certainly dates to the Late Epoch because its good level of preservation, large size, and regular layout are not typical of Virú period sites in the Huacapongo Valley. Late Plainwares make up approximately two-thirds of the domestic ceramic collection here, supporting a late date as the principle date of the structure. It was built over an older site, however. Although the foundations of the older structures are not visible here, the lack of any sort of mound like those described above indicates that this site was residential in nature.

**V-190:** This site is a relatively well-preserved linear rock-walled structure between a major defensive wall and an irrigation canal on the valley floor just beneath the hills at the north end of the Huacapongo Cluster. This structure has been damaged by flooding but appears to be associated with a much larger (ca. 100 m diameter) area of destroyed structures to the immediate northeast. Willey (1953: 251) suggests that this site is one large building of this larger site but apparently did not survey the larger site so at present only this main structure can be considered part of the site. Willey considers the remnant part of the structure to be a large banquette of a larger, now-destroyed building. There are some features along this structure, including a raised
cist and a small platform, and there is a rectangular room of 5.5 m x 10 m at the east end of the structure; this room has its own small platform and cist. This structure does not show up well on satellite imagery and a small woodlot grows over much of this structure today, and the destroyed structures northeast of this site are even more difficult to observe on satellite imagery. For these reasons, I rely on Willey’s assessment that this site, including this large structure, was entirely residential although this could have been a civic building. The structure itself likely dates to the Late Epoch and Willey only dated it to his period, but the site does have a Middle and Late Virú ceramic component as well. Most likely the extant structure dates to the later period but was built over an earlier site; I map the extent of this structure as the total area of the site, but the area of destroyed structures should be surveyed for a more complete picture of the site’s occupational history.

**V-198**: This is a series of two adjacent mounds separated by 15 m, but connected by a wall. One mound is 23 m x 34 m and 3 m high and the other is 27 m x 37 m x 3.4 m (Willey 1953: 86). Willey inferred that the mounds dated to the Early Virú Period and were later reused as a cemetery during the Late Epoch. The present seriation shows continual use from Early Virú through the Late Epoch. I suggest that the mounds were built as civic space during the Early Virú Period and continued to be used at least during the Middle Virú Period.

The mounds are approximately 250 m south of the main part of the Upper Huacapongo Cluster but I consider them to be part of that cluster because there are undocumented possible sites between the main cluster and this site, an undocumented mound lies 200 m west of this site, and V-199, also part of the cluster, lies some 320 m southwest of it. These suggest that the large cluster extends several hundred metres south of its core.

I am reasonably confident that I have relocated the correct site but there are some discrepancies between Willey’s description and the site as it appears today. Willey noted that both mounds are made of rock and earth fill although I noted tapia wall constructions on the mound summits when I surveyed the site (Willey only mentions stone, earth, and gravel as construction material here but these walls may not have been exposed when Willey conducted his survey, although he did note extensive looting at the site). The wall that connects the two mounds runs off to the southeast to join another large wall that runs north-south across this valley; Willey says that this wall runs in a northeastern direction but it appears that he was mistaken in its direction as no other wall or mounds in the area fit the description or pass by a double mound. Willey showed a photo (1954: plate 48, top) looking along this wall that appears very similar to my own photo taken along this wall. Finally, the northern mound is significantly larger than the southern mound and larger than Willey’s description. Willey did not include this site on his map of the central part of the Upper Huacapongo Cluster (1953: fig. 54). Taken together, these discrepancies between Willey’s description and the site as I observe it, and the fact that its precise location and form cannot be determined, causes some doubt as to whether I have relocated the correct site or not but as there are no other sites in the area that fit this description at all I conclude that this is in fact the correct site.

**V-199**: This is another mound site measuring 33 m x 35 m and 1.5 m high with a 10 m wide and 0.75 m high apron along the west side (Willey 1953: 87). The site is made of rock and earth fill. As with V-198, this site is quite a bit south of the main group of the Upper Huacapongo Cluster but as there are undocumented sites between the main cluster body and this site it is reasonable to consider this part of the same cluster. Indeed, Willey notes that there are many undocumented sites to the northwest of V-199, but I also observed several to the south. Also
similarly to V-198 there are some discrepancies between Willey’s description for this site and the site as it appears on satellite imagery and on the ground. As this site is also not mapped specifically it is difficult to be certain that I have relocated the correct site but it is located very near to where Willey placed the site on the master valley map and it is the largest mound within 200 m of this point so it is likely that I have identified the correct site. I visited this site on October 1, 2010 but even still was uncertain about whether or not I had identified the correct site. I did note that the site did roughly match Willey’s descriptions, however.

Willey (1953: 87) observed an unusual canal system is associated with this mound, where two stone-lined canals approached from the northeast and split around the site. He was unsure whether these dated to the occupation of the site or were modern; one of these canals is in use today and has been rejuvenated but there are faint traces of the second canal that Willey described.

Willey dated the site to the Early Virú Period with a Late Virú residential reoccupation. He felt that the main structure was built during the earlier occupation but that residences on top of the mound dated to the later occupation. The present seriation shows that this site was occupied during both the Early and Middle Virú Periods but did not have a Late Virú component. The house structures visible on the site likely do date to the later part of this continuous occupation simply by superposition. That this site is built up on a mound suggests some monumentality, however. I consider this to be a civic and residential site.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent (V-187, V-188, V-189), Good (V-190, V-198, V-199). Willey (1953: fig. 54) mapped V-187, V-188, V-189, and V-190 on the same map and some of these sites can be relocated very clearly. Because they are on the same map, the precise location of each site can be determined even though satellite imagery is of moderate quality in this area and the area has undergone extensive modern land use making some sites, particularly V-190, are not very visible. This map appears to have some minor errors, primarily in alignment and distance between the sites, but each site can be located precisely and mapped with excellent accuracy (except for V-190 which is difficult to see even though its location can be determined). V-198 and V-199 are both difficult to relocate because their generic description fits with other undocumented sites in the area, but I am reasonably confident that I have correctly identified each of these sites. Since they are both isolated sites their actual maps are of excellent quality, but the uncertainty of their location causes me slight hesitation.

V-192/V-194
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Fortification; Residential
Size:
- V-192: 0.348 ha
- V-194: 7.977 ha
Location: 8.3452° S, 78.7341° W (V-192); 8.3444° S, 78.7334° W (V-194)
Description: This is a primarily residential site with some larger houses that likely belonged to higher-status members of the community, but there is no space at the site that can definitively be described as truly civic/ceremonial or community space. The site is built on a hillside at the head of a small quebrada that opens off of the upper branch of the Virú River (also known as the
Carabamba River) and occupies essentially the entire northern hillside of the quebrada. Willey described V-194 as a large site with house platforms and terraces occupying the entire hillside, an area of some 200 m x 500 m (Willey 1953: 252). V-192 is a specific, well-preserved structure situated within V-192. It is not clear why Willey called these separate sites. Willey dated V-192 to the Late Virú Period and V-194 to the Late Epoch, but only surveyed and collected ceramics from the eastern sector of the site and thought that V-194 likely had a longer occupational history than this. The present seriation shows that both V-192 and V-194 were occupied continuously from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch and since these ceramic collections are essentially at either end of the hillside I determine that the entire site dates to these three periods. V-193, an Early Virú site located on the opposite side of this quebrada, is the only other site that Willey surveyed in upper Virú but several undocumented sites are visible.

Willey (1953: 251) only describes V-194 as a large collection of house terraces, platforms, and rock wall foundations scattered about the hillside. The houses and terraces are agglutinated in areas and there are some regular arrangements in places, but overall the structures are scattered and this site likely grew through organic accretion rather than as a planned community. As mentioned above there is no space that has a clear civic/ceremonial function within the wider site and Willey does not describe any but there are some larger rooms visible on satellite imagery that could have been small plazas or the houses of higher-status members of the community, and I interpret the V-192 structure as a single house group for a high-status family within the community.

The V-192 structure is a terraced group of houses built on a steep hillside and it appears to be better-preserved than the larger site. There is some regular arrangement to the structure owing to the nature of terracing but Willey also noted that the overall arrangement of structures was irregular and that the site appears to have grown organically through accretion (1953: 191, fig. 41). The average room within the group was square and 4 m x 4 m with some variation in size and shape, but there were two larger rooms (9 m x 17 m and 6 m x 10 m, separated by two smaller rooms) and at the highest point of the main structure there were two long rooms that Willey described as galleries, at least one of which had a storage cist (Willey 1953: 193). All walls were made of stone with the exterior walls of the main structure being ~1 m thick and internal walls being ~0.6 m thick. There are poorly-preserved house terraces uphill from the main structure to the north, but I include these as part of V-194. Since the present seriation shows both V-192 and V-194 to be entirely contemporary it is not clear why V-192 is better preserved than the site at large but its rooms do tend to be larger and better-built than the rest of the site, and there are some large rooms and evidence of storage here. The placement of the site towards the bottom of the hill and at the head of the quebrada are also telling. For these reasons I see this as a higher-status house, likely belonging to a ruling family. This still appears to be private residential space, though, not public civic space.

The site is protected by a large defensive wall that Willey described to be of similar architecture to the V-192 house group and located just down slope of that structure. This wall runs across the quebrada to block of the easiest entrance to the site via a dry drainage channel, and then runs across the entire base of the hill, connecting with a larger convex-shaped wall that cuts the entire quebrada off from the valley itself (this larger wall runs south and west along the hills and across other nearby quebradas. Similar walls in the area are thought to date to the Late Epoch, and specifically the Chimú Period, and this wall may not be associated with the main occupation of V-192/V-194). The wall at the base of V-192 is clearly associated with this site and serves to block any entrance from the quebrada to the south, while any access to the site from the
other directions is protected by the steeper, more treacherous topography around it. On the east end of the site, on an ovate hill that forms the entrance to the quebrada on the north side, there are a series of concentric terraces climbing the hill. These could potentially be defensive in nature but Willey does not describe this area and it is not possible to determine this without ground-truthing. Nevertheless, the main defensive wall clearly shows that this site was fortified for protection. There is one structure near the head of the quebrada but just outside the wall. This structure could potentially be a small mound or civic space at the entrance to the site, but Willey does not describe this and its nature, or whether it is even a mound or simply another building, cannot be determined without ground-truthing.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The structure that Willey maps as V-192 (1953: fig. 41) can be relocated clearly. Willey describes V-194 as occupying the entire hillside on this part of the quebrada and extending for approximately 200 m x 500 m. There are structures east, west, and north of V-192 with no obvious breaks between them to designate separate sites. When all ruins are taken together they occupy an area close to Willey’s description for the extent and location of this site. I therefore map the entire extent of these ruins as V-194. V-192 is a single structure within this larger site. I map it separately to maintain continuity in the GIS database.

**V-193**

**Time period(s):** Early Virú  
**Type:** Residential  
**Size:** 0.193 ha  
**Location:** 8.3473° S, 78.7321° W  
**Description:** Willey (1953: 74) very briefly describes this site as a series of 7-8 small house terraces scattered on a steep hillside. According to Willey’s master valley map this site is located in the same small quebrada as V-192 and V-194, being the only documented sites in the upper Virú Valley, but he does not describe the size or placement of this site nor its location relative to those sites other than to say that it is on the opposite side of the quebrada. He dated the site to Early Virú and the present seriation agrees with this.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey describes and maps this site as being on a steep hillside on the opposite side of the small quebrada from V-192 and V-194. Willey did not describe the size of this site, only that there were 7-8 scattered house platforms. There are faint traces of ruins on the hill that forms the entrance to the quebrada on the southern side, but there appears to be more rooms than Willey described. It is not clear if this is V-193 or an undocumented site. I map this as V-193.

**V-196**

**Time period(s):** Middle and Late Virú  
**Type:** Civic  
**Size:** 0.087 ha  
**Location:** 8.3778° S, 78.6804° W  
**Description:** This is a small pyramid mound in the Huacapongo Valley. This site cannot be relocated due to poor satellite imagery in the area, but it is not necessarily destroyed. Willey
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(1953: 220) described it as being on the rocky floor of Gudarra Quebrada, between the hills that make up either side of that quebrada, but it is possible that it lies among agricultural fields today. Willey only mapped this site on the master valley map where he showed it to lie south of V-142, a Late Epoch cemetery at the base of the quebrada, but he may have altered the placement of the site in order to fit the labels on the map. Although no clear mounds show on satellite imagery in this area (mounds are typically very subtle or not visible on the rocky quebrada floors and usually can only be identified when they are associated with rock walls) there are some features that could potentially be V-196, and I have mapped the possible mound feature closest to Willey’s placement of the site.

The site is a flat-topped rock-and-earth-fill structure with a diameter of approximately 30 m and a height of 3 m (Willey 1953: 220). The summit of the mound has a rock wall foundation of 5 m x 12 m and there is a 6 m wide and 22 m long ramp on the south side of the summit, leading down to the valley floor. A 2 m-wide stone-lined path runs along this ramp. Given the ramp and the open summit it is clear that this site had a civic function.

Willey dated the site to Late Virú based on Ford’s seriation but ceramics were scarce at this site and the collection is small. I date this site to both the Middle and Late Virú periods based on this collection.

Mapping accuracy: The site cannot be relocated due to poor satellite imagery in the area and the imprecise location mapped by Willey. I have drawn a polygon with Willey’s dimensions over a landscape feature that could possibly be the site, but this is done primarily to have a representation of this site in the GIS, not to accurately relocate it.

**V-201, V-202**

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú  
Type: Residential  
Size: 0.131 ha  
Location: 8.3534° S, 78.7129° W  
Description: These are two rock-walled sites on the floor of the Tomaval Quebrada near its western arm. The two structures are separated by approximately 25 m and are on opposite sides of a small flood channel. This may have once been a single group of houses and Willey (1953: 77-78) describes both sites as being largely destroyed. Regardless of whether they were a single agglutinated structure or two separate structures their proximity to each other and similar ceramic profiles indicate that they are one site. There is a large wall that crosses the entire quebrada that also separates the two sites but this wall post-dates the occupation of these sites.  
Willey dated both sites to Early Virú with intrusive Late Virú burials. The present seriation shows that the main occupation of both sites spanned both the Early and Middle Virú periods. Intrusive burials are indicated by Moche/Huancaco and Late Epoch corporate ware ceramics at the site, but these later intrusive burials have little effect on the domestic ware seriation.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Both of these sites were mapped by Willey (1953: fig. 15) and their size and location can be discerned from this map. The sites are visible on satellite imagery but due to low-resolution imagery it is difficult to make out their extent without Willey’s map. I map each site separately to maintain continuity in the GIS but they can be thought of as a single site.
V-203

Time period(s): Early Virú, Late Epoch
Type: Civic; Residential
Size: 0.125 ha
Location: 8.3521° S, 78.7127° W

Description: This site consists of two groups of clustered rooms built on terraces on the floor of the Tomaval Quebrada just upslope from V-201/V-202. The clusters have 13 and 15 rooms, respectively, with an average room size of 3 m x 5 m although the southernmost, downslope group has two large rooms at the lower entrance to the group and one of these rooms has a banquette (Willey 1953: 78). The room at the very back of the site, highest up the hill, is also larger than the others and has some closet-like subdivisions within the room, and there is a cleared area outside the house group just above this room that could be a small plaza. There is a path that runs along the west side of the structure leading from this cleared area to the rest of the house group. The site is clearly primarily domestic in nature as shown by large amounts of domestic ware sherd material, chipped and ground lithic material, and a small amount of shell from the ocean. The site also has civic/ceremonial space, as described below.

The site is built on a 10-20 m wide knoll between two dry drainage channels. Given the site’s layout it is clear that these channels pre-date the site and that the site. During my survey of this site (November 8, 2010) I noted large boulders in the western channel that had clearly been used as grinding stones, further supporting the argument that these drainage channels do not post-date the site. I mention this because the layout of the site is very interesting. The site’s location within the rolling hills of the quebrada affords it a small viewshed encompassing a tunnel-like view of the area due south of it. The lowest, southernmost part of the site sits approximately 50 m higher than the floor of the Huacapongo Valley, and the highest, northernmost part of the site sits another 20 m above this. The drainage channels serve to restrict access to this site such that anyone coming to the site would have to come from the south and would first come to the two large rooms at the bottom of the site. The large room with storage bins at the north end of the site and the cleared plaza-like area behind this overlook the entire site. The site is not truly fortified (there are no purely defensive walls and access up the drainage channel to the site does not appear to be blocked in any way), but it is in a defendable location nevertheless.

Given the placement of the rooms that appear to have more than a purely residential purpose I hypothesize that the two large rooms at the lower entrance to the site serve as civic structures and the high room with storage bins at the highest part of the site is a house or room administered by a village chief. This site is heavily looted due to intrusive burials but it is an interesting site and the house walls themselves appear relatively well-preserved, and this would be a good site from which to study village dynamics during the Early Virú Period.

Willey (1953: 78) dated the main occupation of the site to the Early Virú Period with intrusive burials dating to the Late Epoch. The present seriation also identifies an Early Virú and a Late Epoch component at the site, but the Late Epoch component has substantial amounts of domestic ware ceramics and was likely not purely a burial component. The site is just west of V-145, a major Late Epoch site, and it is likely that some members of that community settled in the older structures of V-203. The architecture at V-203 is typical of purely Early Virú sites in the
area and very different from the architecture at V-145 so the site layout of V-203 likely dates to Early Virú.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 15) including this on a map of sites in this part of the quebrada and this site can be clearly identified on satellite imagery.

**V-205 (Corral Hill)**

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú  
Type: Civic; Fortification; Residential  
Size: 0.579 ha  
Location: 8.3586° S, 78.7033° W

Description: Willey (1953: 99) described this site as consisting of small 3 m x 3 m rooms, two to a house, built on four ascending terraces on the crest of the hill that separates the Niño and Tomaval Quebradas. Although Willey only described four houses, during my own survey of the site I noticed an additional series of terraces farther northwest along the same ridge, and even farther back into the hills in this direction a partially-destroyed rock-and-earth mound with an obvious civic function. There were also smaller terraces scattered between the two main clusters of terraces. Willey considered this site to be a fortified residential site; I noted abundant chipped lithic material at the site and Ford’s collection contains numerous domestic ware sherds, so it is likely that this was primarily residential space. It is just uphill from and between 20-40 m higher than contemporary site V-33 and it is likely that V-205 served as a hilltop retreat or redoubt and civic space for V-33. It is unclear whether V-205 was permanently occupied or whether it was purely used for ceremonies and in times of duress, but given the abundance of domestic refuse and presence of small residence-like structures that nearly take up entire unwalled terraces (instead of a large walled-off gathering space, as would be expected for a retreat similar to V-80 or V-132) I argue that this was still a residential site that was also fortified and had civic space.

The fortified nature of the site is clear because of its location occupying the crest of a steep, rocky hill, but it was a less formal fortification than walled sites in other parts of the valley, or than the Castillo-style of site built during the Middle Virú Period. The structures were built in an area that was difficult to access and would be especially difficult to approach if being attacked by slingstones. Sure enough, during my survey on November 12, 2010 I noted a pile of 12-15 small (baseball-sized), irregular river cobbles on a terrace on the south face of the site, overlooking V-33 below. These stones were clearly not ground or used as domestic tools, and there is no natural river-rounded stone on the hill slopes of the Huacapongo Valley, which are primarily made up of irregular boulders and sharp decaying stone. For this reason, I consider V-205 to be a lookout or retreat for the residents of V-33 (the close proximity of these two sites and lack of any sort of wall between them indicates that the people living at these two sites were not fighting each other). V-205 offers an excellent lookout location, as well, with clear views of the lower two-thirds of the lower Huacapongo Valley, a good view of the lower Virú/Carabamba Valley, and of the river confluence or up-river part of the Virú Valley neck.

There is also civic space at V-205 in the form of a rock-and-earth mound on the northwestern-most platform of the line of terraced platforms that are strung along the crest of this hill. Willey apparently never visited surveyed this part of the site and only considered one of the several clusters of platforms to be the site; because there are continuous terraces anywhere where the topography allows I argue that these are all part of the same site and that this mound is
contemporary with the rest of V-205. Indeed, I noted Early Virú-style ceramics on the mound ("sandwich" ceramics, partly-oxidized ceramics considered by archaeologists who work in Virú to date to the Early Virú Period. I was not able to determine which of Ford’s ceramic styles these fit into, but are likely Huacapongo Polished Plain), as well as some Late Epoch-style sherds. This mound has been heavily excavated and is essentially cleft into four quarters. There is a cleared area near the mound that could have served as a plaza, but the exact nature of the mound is unclear. Interestingly, this terrace is lower than those to the south, is tucked back into the hills, and lies 60-80 m higher than the level of the quebrada floors to the east and west. It is not in a highly-conspicuous location visible from many locations, unlike much of the other Early Virú civic space in the area, and especially unlike Middle Virú civic space (which is highly-conspicuous). Although this mound is visible from the Virú Valley neck and from the lower part of the Huacapongo Valley, its location gives the distinct impression that it was built to be hidden, possibly as a community gathering space for a population that did not feel entirely safe.

Ford (archives; see also Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2) noted burials at this site and recovered some Late Epoch corporate wares, leading Willey (1953: 99) to suggest that this site was used as a cemetery and possibly as a lookout during the Late Epoch, but Willey dated the primary occupation to Early Virú. The present seriation dates the domestic ware ceramic material to both Early and Middle Virú; while there were some Late Epoch burials at the site they were not abundant enough to affect the overall dating of the site.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: 99) did not map this site or describe its precise location but I am confident that I have relocated it correctly. Willey apparently only surveyed a small part of the site, however (likely the southeastern-most terraces of the string, which extends linearly northwest-southeast along the crest of a large hill). I have included the string of visible terraces, an area clearly larger than what Willey considered to be the site.

V-206 (Corral Gate Mound)
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Civic
Size: 0.21 ha
Location: 8.3619° S, 78.7057° W
Description: This pyramid mound lies on the valley floor, surrounded by agricultural fields approximately 250 m south of the hill spur between the Niño and Tomaval Quebradas, where V-33 and V-205 are located. Indeed there are several sites in the nearby quebradas that are contemporary with V-206, and V-206 likely served as a local huaca or community gathering space during the Early and Middle Virú periods. The site is in a reasonably conspicuous location with good views of the lower Huacapongo Valley and the quebradas to the north. The location of the mound is interesting since it is located in the open fields and is easily-accessible, unlike the majority of contemporary occupation in Huacapongo which tends to be built in difficult-to-access locations and outside of the limits of arable land. Presumably V-206 was used as a community gathering space during times of safety.

The mound is rectangular and fairly large with a total footprint of 40 m x 45 m and a summit of 27 m x 28 m (Willey 1953: 88). The summit is divided into three levels of varying height; the highest level, in the southeast corner, is 5 m high and 17 m x 22 m in height, the northeast corner is 4.25 m high and 7 m x 14 m, and the western side is 3 m high and 9 m x 10 m

*Note: The text is a natural representation of the document. Some formatting, such as tables and figures, may not be available in the text.*
in extent. This gives the impression that the mound had a summit plaza and more-restricted space and suggests a general civic/ceremonial use; Willey observed abundant piled stone on the mound summit and thought some could be the destroyed foundations of houses, but also noted that stone walls were used as part of the main construction of the mound and the three summit platforms likely had stone retaining walls, so it is more likely that the mound did not have a residential function.

The mound is built of rock, gravel fill, and truncated conical adobes (Willey 1953: 88). Willey considered truncated conical adobes to be diagnostic of Guanape and Early Virú construction, although this association is too tenuous for these adobes to be truly diagnostic. Nevertheless, the earliest ceramic component at the site is Early Virú and this supports Willey’s contention that the bulk of the site was built during that period. Willey observed several looter’s pits and stone-lined cists that he interpreted as tombs in the summit of the mound, and found Late Virú ceramics associated with these excavations, whereas the Early Virú ceramics came primarily from the base of the mound. The present seriation identifies continual use, however, from Early Virú through the Late Epoch; there is a relatively high amount of Late Virú corporate ware and Late Epoch domestic ware indicating use of the site as a cemetery and possibly a residential site during those periods, but the civic function of the site dates to both Early and Middle Virú owing to the continuum of HPP and Castillo Plain domestic ware ceramics.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey only mapped this site on the master map for all Virú Valley sites and did not photograph this site nor describe its precise location relative to other sites and landscape features. Nevertheless, there is a mound that fits his size and general location description very well located where this site is indicated on the master map and I am confident that this is the correct site. I visited this site on November 11, 2010 and confirmed the location of the site, but the mound was covered with maize stalks and could not be surveyed.

**V-208**

**Time period(s):** Middle and Late Virú

**Type:** Civic

**Size:** 0.024 ha

**Location:** 8.3705° S, 78.7021° W

**Description:** Willey (1953: 88) describes this small mound as being 12 m x 13 m—oriented northwest-southeast—and 1.2 m high, with a lower apron of 7 m x 8 m on the southeast side. Willey noted boulders covering the mound and suspected that it was built entirely of rock-and-earth. Although Willey did not go into more detail than this, based on his short description it is clear that this site served a civic function since it was a mound located in agricultural bottomlands on the south side of the Huacapongo Valley, the northernmost of a cluster of sites on and below the hills to the east of Cerro Sarraque. Unlike in the lower Virú Valley, where residential sites were often built on natural sand dunes within agricultural fields, raised sites on the floor of the Huacapongo Valley are intentional constructions to add height and to be conspicuous, and thus are likely civic buildings. Willey dated this site to Late Virú but the present seriation shows use during both the Middle and Late Virú periods.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. This site cannot be relocated because Willey’s description of its location is very general and because satellite imagery in this part of Huacapongo is of relatively low resolution, making it difficult for mounds to appear distinct from the valley flats.
Furthermore there are several modern houses in the area; these are often built on top of mounds but with such a small mound (~20 m total length) these houses can obscure the mound. There is a small mound with no house on it near to where Willey located this site on the master map of all Virú Valley sites. This mound fits the approximate size that Willey described for V-208 and is the nearest possibility for this site so I have mapped it as the site.

**V-209**

Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch  
Type: Residential  
Size: 0.012 ha  
Location: 8.3728° S, 78.6991° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 270) describes this site in tandem with V-210 because they are separated by less than fifty meters, but the collection from this site dates to quite distinct periods than V-210, so I prefer to keep them separate. V-209 sits on the north end of a spur of the hills that mark the south margin of the Huacapongo Valley and the site lies just above and back from the modern limits of agriculture. The site consists of a single structure of 6 m x 11 m with a small internal room in the northwest corner. This is a small residential structure, likely a small area continually built over for a long period of time. It appears to be unrelated to V-210, which lies just up the hill behind the site. Willey dated the site to Early Virú, Late Virú, and the Late Epoch based on Ford’s seriation, but the present seriation dates the site continually from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.  
Mapping accuracy: Good. Satellite coverage in this area is of low resolution and the walls of this site cannot be identified, but Willey (1953: fig. 63) mapped this site, V-210, and the local topography and based on these features and Willey’s description of the site’s location I am able to map the location and size of this site with reasonable accuracy. The foundation walls of the site itself may be destroyed, however.

**V-210**

Time period(s): Early Virú, Late Epoch  
Type: Residential  
Size: 0.556 ha  
Location: 8.3738° S, 78.6991° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 270) described this site in tandem with V-209, which is very near and just downhill from V-210, but the two sites are not contemporary during Early or Middle Virú and I consider them separately. V-210 is a series of terraced house platforms extending for approximately 100 m along a narrow (30 m wide) hillcrest between two small quebradas or flooding drainages in the hills that make up the southern margin of the Huacapongo Valley. V-209 lies on the northernmost part of the hillcrest and just above the modern agricultural fields, and V-210 is thus located near to, but outside of, arable land. Willey did not mention whether this site was built to be in a difficult-to-access or easily-defended location; some approaches to this site appear to be quite steep but overall the site does not appear to be built with defense in mind.
(I did not visit this part of the valley and am unfamiliar with these hills but their overall
topography can be seen in satellite imagery).

The house platforms can be identified by rock wall foundations and rooms are generally
rectangular and vary in size from 6 m x 10 m to 7 m x 12 m, with some smaller terraces that may
have served as house platforms as well (Willey 1953: 270). Willey noted that many terraces had
abundant refuse and ash deposits, and it is clear that this site is residential (no clear civic space is
observed at the site but there were civic structures in the valley nearby). Willey also noted house
structures in the small quebrada east of and downslope from V-210 and was not sure whether
these were all one site but I consider them as a single site.

Willey dated the site to the Early Virú Period with a Late Epoch reoccupation and my
seriation agrees with this assessment, showing a clear distinction between the two periods.
Willey dated the visible structures to the Late Epoch owing to their large size and similarity to
contemporary sites in Huacapongo, but Willey thought that the terraced platforms were
originally built during the Early Virú Period. I consider the entire site to date to both these
periods and, given the large domestic ware ceramic components, consider the site to be purely
residential.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Satellite coverage in this area is of low resolution but Willey (1953:
fig. 63) mapped this site, V-209, and the local topography and based on these features I am able
to map the location and size of this site with reasonable accuracy. On older Google Earth satellite
imagery there are some wall alignments in the area that I presume is this site, but these wall
alignments do not match those shown on Willey’s map of this site. In part this may be due to the
low quality of satellite imagery in the area, but some of the site appears to be heavily disturbed
due to looting, and this is even more evident on more recent imagery. Despite not being able to
clearly see the site on satellite imagery I am confident that I have relocated the site and mapped
its approximate extent because there are no other areas near this site that closely match Willey’s
map of the topography here.

V-212

Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Fortification; Residential
Size: 8.225 ha
Location: 8.3787° S, 78.6959° W

Description: This site consists of a series of terraced platforms built along the crest of a high,
steep hill on the south margin of the Huacapongo Valley. Willey (1953: 99) estimated that the hill
rose 300 m above sea level; according to the elevation estimate in Google Earth the highest
terraces at the site are 345 m a.s.l. and approximately 150 m higher than the closest fields in the
valley below. This hill is due west of Sarraque and has abundant archaeological remains on it,
but V-212 is on the opposite side of the hill from most of the nearby sites and faces northeast
whereas the other local sites face northwest, but due to its location at the top of the hillcrest it
would have excellent views of the entire Huacapongo Valley and possibly of parts of the Virú
Valley. The site is obviously built in a defensive location but does not have a perimeter wall like
similar sites in the lower Virú Valley (e.g. V-80). Furthermore, this site extends continuously
from the valley bottom to the crest of the hill spur that the site is built on, with easier (though
still difficult) access from a quebrada to the east of the site. The site is backed to the west (i.e. on
the opposite side of the hillcrest) by a cliff that averages 50 m high; the only access to the site is from the east or through the hills and along the hillcrest itself from the south.

Willey apparently only surveyed the highest part of the site as he noted only 15 rectangular stone house foundations built on ascending steps up the hill. Ford (archives; see also Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2) made two ceramic collections at the site; collection A came from the platforms themselves and collection B, which dates slightly earlier, came from downslope from the hilltop terraces. Neither Ford nor Willey made any mention of other structures lower down on the hill but there clearly are many extending from the fields to the crest. The structures are scattered but extend down the entire hill, either as individual terraces or small clusters of terraces where there is more space, but the structures are essentially continuous; terraces are built anywhere where the steep topography will allow and some may have been washed away by El Niño flooding. This area of the site needs to be tested with ground-truthing but for now I will consider all structures to be part of the same site.

At the base of the site, just above the fields, there are one or two small knolls with what appear to be concentric terraces built on them suggesting a fortified entrance to the site. Willey (1953: 99) surveyed structures that were clearly residential at the top of the site, but relatively few ceramics were recovered from the terraces at the top of the site which might indicate that the highest terraces were not inhabited regularly but rather served as a hilltop retreat for the houses at the lower part of the site. Given the steep, treacherous slope it would make sense for people to live primarily at the base of the slope, close to fields and water, and to retreat to the top in times of duress, but this needs to be tested. Indeed this site would be an interesting location to study the nature of fortified towns in the Huacapongo Valley through multiple time periods.

Willey (1953: 99) dated this site to Early Virú and the Late Epoch based on its ceramic components. He thought that the terraces were first built during the Early Virú Period and were reconstructed and new houses built on them during the Tomaval Period (Late Epoch), with smaller re-use during the Estero (Chimú-Inca) and Colonial periods. Since Willey apparently only surveyed one series of adjacent terraces it is difficult to determine the occupational history of the entire large site but for this project I consider the entire site as one, and based on a reseriation of the ceramic collections I consider the site to have been occupied continuously from Early Virú through the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Good. It is difficult to determine exactly which part of this large site Willey surveyed and considered to be the site. Willey did not map this site specifically and it is considerably larger than the 15 contiguous terraced platforms that Willey described. Although much of this area was not surveyed and I have not visited this site, from available satellite imagery the ruins stretching from the crest of this hill northeast to the base of the hill appear to be related and I have mapped them all as one large site. There are several undocumented hills to the east of V-212—concentrated especially at the base of the hills in this area but with some structures on other hill crests and spurs—but these are somewhat separated from V-212 and are too far from the area of V-212 that was surveyed to be able to consider these part of the same site. This area is a major gap in Willey’s study and should be surveyed for a more complete understanding of settlement patterns in the Huacapongo region.

V-213
Time period(s): Early Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.099 ha
Location: 8.3758° S, 78.6991° W

Description: This site consists of 12-13 house platforms built on terraces along the crest of a small hill spur between two arms of a dry quebrada (Willey 1953: 272, fig. 64). In some cases the terraced platforms are contiguous and in other cases they are separated somewhat, owing to the topography of the hill. Rooms average between 3.5 m x 6.5 m to 4 m x 9 m.

The site lies 150 m to the east of contemporary site V-214 and just downslope and north of V-211 (Late Epoch). V-213 and V-214 are separated by a quebrada and a small hill that is largely free of ruins but there are several ruins just behind both V-213 and V-214 to the south, and in some sense these two sites are like the arms of a U-shaped site, though cut by the quebrada. Willey clearly ignored these other ruins—other than to mention that there was a hill spur with an unsurveyed site separating these two sites—and did not include them as part of either V-213 or V-214. I am hesitant to consider these all one site but this is a possibility that could be tested but significant mining activity in the area in recent years has demolished part of the hill separating the two sites and the downslope portions of these sites.

Willey dated the site to Early Virú and the Late Epoch based on ceramics but argued that the structures dated to the later occupation since their architecture was more typical of purely Late Epoch sites in the area. According to the present seriation, however, the site dates entirely to the Early Virú Period based on a large collection of HPP sherds; ceramics typical of later periods are present in very limited quantities and it is likely that there was a very minor continued occupation or re-occupation but the primary occupation is clearly Early Virú.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 64) mapped this site and the geography of the area fits this map well and the site as I have mapped it is the same size as Willey mapped. However, the arrangement of structures within the site appear somewhat different from what Willey mapped. Note also that there is an area of ruins to the southwest of this structure that are not mapped and may connect V-213 to V-214 to the west.

V-214

Time period(s): Early Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.539 ha
Location: 8.3763° S, 78.7004° W

Description: This site is larger than but otherwise similar to V-213, which lies 150 m to the east and is separated from that site by a hill spur and a quebrada, with additional ruins between and to the south of these two sites (see description for V-213; at present I do not consider these to be a single site. Note that Willey placed V-214 as being 350 m west of V-213 but this is erroneous). V-214 consists of several walled terraces extending along the crest of a small hill spur and down the east side of the spur onto the floor of a small rocky quebrada. Terraces range in size from 3 m x 3 m to 6.5 m x 12 m (Willey 1953: 273). Willey noted several raised banquettes or platforms with narrow passageways running through some of them, indicating some complexity in the use of space at the site, but it appears to be primarily residential in nature. Willey did not survey the ruins on the slope and quebrada floor to the east of the site but presumed them to be part of the
main occupation of this site; many of these lower houses have been destroyed by heavy quarrying of this hill and quebrada in recent years.

As with V-213 the ceramic collection from V-214 consisted of a large amount of HPP sherds and small quantities of sherd material dating to later Virú and to the Late Epoch, leading Willey to date this site to both Early Virú and the Late Epoch. Based on architecture, though, Willey dated the primary occupation of the site to the Late Epoch because the larger terraces are more similar to purely Late Epoch sites in the area than they are to the small, haphazardly-arranged terraces of purely Early Virú sites. Following the present seriation, however, I date the site purely to the Early Virú Period based on the large quantity of HPP indicating a large domestic occupation during that period. There likely was an insignificant continuing occupation or re-occupation in later periods.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 65) mapped this site and the geography of the area fits this map well and the site as I have mapped it is the same size as Willey mapped. However, the arrangement of structures within the site appear somewhat different from what Willey mapped. Note also that there is an area of ruins to the south and southeast of this structure that are not mapped and may connect V-214 to V-213 to the east.

V-215
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic
Size: 0.167 ha
Location: 8.3725° S, 78.7021° W
Description: This is a rectangular mound of 1 m in height located on the valley floor near the south margin of the Huacapongo Valley. The main bulk of the mound is 25 m x 25 m and there is a lower attached platform (12 m x 15 m) on the east side (Willey 1953: 151). The mound is made of earth fill with rectangular adobes and rock, but apart from a modern house standing on the mound when Willey conducted his survey there were no rooms or divisions on top of the mound. Although the mound is low, residential sites in Huacapongo tend to be built on the valley margins and, unlike in lower Virú where residential sites can be built on natural sand dunes, building a mound in Huacapongo to add height suggests some sort of civic function. This, coupled with the ease of building a site on a hill adjacent to the site or on the nearby valley margins (the hills adjacent to this site do not appear to have structures on them but satellite imagery is of relatively low resolution here and some observed features on these hills could be ruins), leads me to argue that this site had a civic rather than a residential function. In this sense it is significant that one sherd of Virú Negative corporate ware was collected by Ford at this site, as this sherd type, diagnostic of the Middle Virú Period, is rare outside of the major contemporary sites.

Willey dated the site entirely to the Middle Virú Period and the present seriation agrees with this.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey did not map this site specifically nor describe its location relative to landscape features or other sites. There are two modern buildings on top of what appears to be a mound with the approximate dimensions that Willey described near to where Willey placed this site on the master map of all Virú sites; I have mapped this as the site.
V-216
Time period(s): Middle and Late Virú
Type: Civic
Size: 0.018 ha
Location: 8.374° S, 78.7019° W
Description: This is a small, low mound (8 m x 13 m in extent and 0.5 m high) near the southern margin of the Huacapongo Valley, close to V-215 and other sites in this group (Willey 1953: 151). The site is made of rock-and-earth fill and the only architectural evidence is a partial stone foundation of a building at one end of the mound. Following similar logic to that described for V-215 I consider this site to be a small civic building since the building of a mound, however small, involves a certain amount of monumentality while secure living conditions could easily be obtained by building on the nearby hills, which were occupied contemporaneously with this site but the hillsides adjacent to this site show no evidence of habitation. Willey dated this site to the Middle Virú Period but the present seriation shows both Middle and Late Virú occupation.
Mapping accuracy: Poor. This site cannot be relocated because its small size and location near the rocky valley margins rather than in the middle of agricultural fields makes it difficult to observe on satellite imagery, and Willey did not map this site or describe its location relative to landscape features or other sites. To map this site I have drawn a polygon of the size described by Willey over the point on the master site map that shows the location of this site.

V-217
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Funerary
Size: 0.326 ha
Location: 8.3753° S, 78.7035° W
Description: This cemetery is small, covering an area of 40 m x 75 m and containing 50-60 looted graves when Willey surveyed the site (1953: 294). It is located on a small sandy plateau just north of the hills that form the southern margin of the Huacapongo Valley. Willey dated the site to the Late Epoch but the current seriation shows continual use from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.
Mapping accuracy: Poor. The precise location of this site cannot be relocated because Willey only described it very generically and there appear to be more looted cemeteries than the two that Willey documented in the area where Willey placed this site. That said, a sandy area with what appears to be looting activity and of the approximate size that Willey described was located near to where Willey located V-217 on the master valley map but appears to have been destroyed by recent quarrying activity in the area. I have drawn this area as the site.

V-218
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú
Type: Funerary
Jordan T. Downey (2015)

Size: 0.346 ha
Location: 8.3775° S, 78.7047° W

Description: V-218 is a relatively small (40 m x 125 m) cemetery on an alluvial plain on the floor of a small quebrada on the south margin of the Huacapongo Valley (Willey 1953: 100). It is located to the south of and in the same quebrada as V-217, and there are several other sites nearby, many of which are contemporary with V-218. Willey observed a moderate number of looter’s pits—which he felt were quite old—and ceramic and human remains were not abundant. Willey dated the cemetery to both Early Virú and the Late Epoch, although Ford noted in his ceramic worksheet for the site that the earlier component continued into the Middle Virú Period (but dated the site only to Early Virú in his final study; Ford 1949). The current seriation shows continual use from Early to Middle Virú; there may be a very small continued use after these periods but this is insignificant for my purposes.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Although Willey did not provide a precise location for this site or discuss its location relative to landscape features or local sites, there is a sandy area with looter’s pits close to where Willey mapped this site on the master map of all Virú Valley sites, and this area fits the general location description and is of the approximate size that Willey described for this site.

**V-221**

Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic
Size: 0.344 ha
Location: 8.3767° S, 78.6591° W

Description: This is an L-shaped earth-and-rock mound surrounded by a massive rock wall (with stones with 1 m diameter) located on the floor of the Huacapongo Valley north of the river and less that a kilometer west-southwest of the Huacapongo pueblo (Willey 1953: 152). The higher platform is 1 m high and 7 m x 27 m in extent and the lower platform is 12.5 m x 15 m. The perimeter wall surrounding the structure measures 40 m x 75 m in total. The wall and mound is oriented southwest-northeast. The perimeter wall is interesting. It did not completely enclose the mound when Willey conducted his survey but he referred to it as an outlining wall and presumably it was complete. Willey noted that the wall, particularly on the northwest side, was quite massive. He described it as “really an alignment of huge stones rather than a masonry wall. Here the boulders used are a meter in diameter and are arranged in a triple file” (1953: 152). There were other similar rock alignments in the vicinity of this site but these were not clearly associated with a Prehispanic archaeological site and Willey thought that these could be piles and walls of field stone made by modern farmers. Because this site is clearly a mound built to add height in the flat valley and is surrounded by a wall with massive, difficult to move stones, this site clearly had a civic function.

This site cannot be conclusively relocated. The large perimeter wall and nearby stone walls that Willey described should be visible—especially because their southwest-northeast alignment, which is different from the typical east-west field arrangement in this part of the valley—but I am unable to locate the site with any certainty. Although Willey’s description of this site is sufficiently detailed, he did not describe its location relative to other sites or landscape.
features and this makes it all the more difficult to relocate. The fact that the mound itself is not very high, and modern houses are often built on low mounds in the area, also make it difficult to relocate. Interestingly, there is a field arrangement of the size that Willey described for this site with a possible large wall on the northwest side at the point where Willey mapped this site on the master valley map. Satellite imagery is not clear, but there is an L-shaped area of the field that is planted and has a house on part of it but that nevertheless could be this mound.

Willey dated this site to the Middle Virú Period and the present seriation agrees with this. Mapping accuracy: Poor. This site cannot be relocated conclusively and so I have drawn a polygon over a field with the dimensions that Willey described for this site, located at the point where Willey mapped this site on the master valley map. Interestingly, there is some suggestion that this could, in fact, be the correct site (see description above).

V-223

Time period(s): Early through Late Virú
Type: Civic; Residential
Size: 0.455 ha
Location: 8.3668° S, 78.6534° W
Description: V-223 is a 38 m x 52 m enclosure of rock-walled rooms with older terraced platforms to the northeast of this main structure. The site is built on the spur of a hill on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley, approximately 750 m due north of the town of Huacapongo (Willey 1953: 275). Although the site is on a hill spur it is at the southern edge of the hills and located just above the current fields and it does not appear to be built in a defensive location, unlike many contemporary sites in Huacapongo. Remnants of an irrigation canal run just below the site to the southwest and may be an out-of-use section of the larger irrigation canal, in modern use, that runs at the base of this hill. Another canal cuts through the site just above the main structure; this is a major canal that draws from the head of the lower Huacapongo Valley about a kilometer to the east of V-223 and 30 m higher than the site and runs along the hills and across a dry quebrada to the east. This canal currently does not carry water and is destroyed in places but it is clearly well-maintained and several small aqueducts are visible. It is unclear whether this canal is archaeological or entirely modern or whether it is associated with V-223 at all.

V-223 lies just uphill and east of V-224, a smaller but similar site of indeterminate age (Willey 1953: 274). The two sites are located on the eastern arm of a mid-sized quebrada. This quebrada has numerous undocumented ruins. Many of the most-visible sites are large, open compounds, and their size, shape, and level of preservation suggest that they date to the Late Epoch as they are similar to purely Late Epoch sites in the area. Several of these appear to be built on terraces or over demolished ruins that are clearly older and are more typical of Early and Middle Virú sites in Huacapongo. It is unclear why Willey overlooked these other sites. Modern quarrying activity in the quebrada (visible in the most recent Google Earth imagery but not present in older images) has damaged part of V-224 and has destroyed at least one other structure that is likely archaeological. V-223 and the remaining sites in this quebrada are threatened by this quarrying activity and they should be documented and surveyed promptly.
The room arrangements of the main structure at V-223 are interesting, as shown on Willey’s map of the site (1953: fig. 66). Rooms are of irregular shape, largely due to their placement along natural terraces of the hill that the site sits on. Rooms are made of rock wall foundations but adobes were used in places for the wall itself. At the northwest end of the site, which is farthest uphill and away from the valley bottom, there is a large room whose length is 38 m (spanning the entire width of the site) and width varies from 10 m to 20 m. Just below this is a room with a long banquette that crosses into two rooms. Two other rooms each have six small (2 m x 2 m) bins that were presumably used for storage. These features indicate some sort of administrative function at the site so I consider this site to be a residential site with civic space.

There are additional poorly-preserved terraces extending another 80 m farther up the hill to the northeast of the limits of the site as Willey mapped them, and these are likely older terraces of a single, continuous site. I map these as part of the site.

It is unclear when these structures were built. Willey dated the site to both the Early Virú Period and the Late Epoch and considered the main structure to date to the later period due to its architecture, but the present seriation shows instead continual use from Early Virú through Late Virú (Willey did not describe the terraces northeast of the main structure). Nevertheless, the structures as shown likely do date to later renovations at the site since they are larger and more complex than Early Virú structures tend to be and there is evidence of older constructions at the site. I do not include V-224 in this site despite its close proximity to V-223 since Willey did not make a collection of that site, nor do I include other structures on this same hill that are near to V-223. It is entirely possible, however, that these unsurveyed structures are all part of one large site.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. This site is larger than what Willey (1953: fig. 66) mapped as older, poorly-preserved terraces extend farther to the northeast than the mapped limits of this site, and these other terraces are included in the current map for this site. The part of the site that Willey surveyed and mapped can be relocated conclusively.

V-225

Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.017 ha
Location: 8.3726° S, 78.6818° W
Description: This is a two-room structure built at the base of a hill spur on the floor of a small unnamed quebrada just west of the larger Gudarra Quebrada on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley. The site is built on two separate terraces of the sloping quebrada floor; the higher room is 7.5 m x 11.5 m and has a raised banquette, and the lower room is 4.5 m x 10 m (Willey 1953: 255, fig. 56). Willey noted an internal doorway connecting the two rooms but no external doorways. The wall that forms the southwest side of the structure continues to the northwest for several meters but has been cut through by a flooding drainage. There is an unsurveyed structure some 50 m to the northwest but it is unclear if this structures is associated with V-225 or not. There are several other undocumented sites on the floor of this quebrada and the hills surrounding it (contemporary site V-227 and V-226, dated to the Late Epoch, are on the
west side of the quebrada) but these cannot be described without dating them; based on their visible architecture they likely date to Early or Middle Virú but this remains a hypothesis alone.

Willey noted that the main canal on the north side of the Huacapongo Valley ran just below this site (this branch of the canal does not appear to be in use today) and the site is located ~40 m above the current limits of agriculture, but it is not clear whether this site was associated with this canal. The site does not appear to be built in a defensive location. Willey dated the site to the Late Epoch but the current seriation shows continual use from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent

**V-227**

Time period(s): Middle Virú to Late Epoch  
Type: Residential  
Size: 0.153 ha  
Location: 8.3709° S, 78.6843° W  
Description: This small site is on the western hillside of a small quebrada on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley, approximately 300 m northwest of and across the quebrada from V-225. V-226 (Late Epoch) and several undocumented sites are in the quebrada between V-225 and V-227, and other undocumented sites are uphill from V-227. V-228 is on the opposite side of this same hill, facing a different quebrada. Willey (1953: 255) only mapped part of the site, consisting of two rectangular buildings on adjacent terraces, the larger and higher of which is 6.5 m x 24 m in extent and is itself built on two terraces, with a raised banquette and some internal divisions within the room. Willey noted other structures just uphill from V-227 and considered them to be part of the same site but did not map or survey them; I include these as part of the site map. The site is clearly residential in nature and although it is built in a defendable location approximately 20 m higher than the current field level but it is not a fortification. As with V-225, one old canal runs just below the site and another one that appears to have been built or maintained in modern times but is currently not in use cuts through the site just above the portion that Willey mapped. It is not clear whether either of these canals are associated with this site. Willey dated this site to the Late Epoch but the present seriation shows continual use from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 56) only mapped part of this site but mentioned that it continued farther uphill to the northwest. I have mapped these uphill terraces as well.

**V-228**

Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Virú  
Type: Residential  
Size: 0.291 ha  
Location: 8.3692° S, 78.6855° W  
Description: V-228 is located on the western slope of the same hill as V-227 (which is on the eastern slope) and extends down the hill, facing a small rocky quebrada. Partially contemporary site V-229 is in this quebrada as well as several undocumented sites located on the hill slopes
towards the back of the quebrada and a series of terraced platforms on the hill spur on the opposite side of the quebrada (these platforms are close to and may be related to V-176/V-177). Willey (1953: 198) observed a series of 5-6 large, well-preserved rooms extending in a single line down the hill, with poorly-preserved house terraces below this. The main structure is clearly younger than and built over an older site. The building is 8-10 m wide across a small crest of the hill and each room within it is 4-10 m long. Some rooms have raised banquettes and another banquette connects two rooms, some rooms are connected by stairs or a doorway. The western, lowest wall of the main structure encloses several boulders and there is a passageway here that leads to the structure; Willey (1953: 200, fig. 43) interpreted this as a heavily-defended entrance to the structure. Essentially this structure appears to be a single house built over older house terraces, and some terrace retaining walls are partially intact. The site is clearly residential and, while built in a defendable location, is not truly a fortification. A canal that is not currently in use but appears to have been maintained in modern times runs at the base of the hill just below this site, but it is not clear if it is at all associated with the site.

Ford made two collections at this site, collection A from the main structure and collection B from the terraces below it (see Appendix A Table 1). Ford (archives) dated the main structure to Late Virú built over an Early Virú settlement, but also thought that there might be a Middle Virú component. Ford dated collection B, from below the main structure, to Early Virú and possibly continuing into Middle Virú. Willey (1953: 200) then dated the main structure to Late Virú and the house terraces, which are clearly older, to Early Virú with a minor Late Epoch reoccupation (apparently based on 19 Late Epoch corporate ware sherds in the two collections). The present seriation shows very similar ceramic distributions from each collection, although the collection from the main structure does have a higher proportion of later domestic wares, confirming that it was a later structure built over older terraces (this structure is clearly younger than the terraces). I argue that the main structure was a renovation of the site undertaken during the Late Virú Period but the bulk of the site dates to both Early and Middle Virú. There is a cluster of small, well-preserved rooms at the base of the slope, built on the floor of the quebrada rather than on terraces along the hill. Neither Ford nor Willey described these structures. Their small size suggests that they were built in the Early or Middle Virú period. Presumably they are better-preserved than the terraces but are contemporary with them and are part of the same site. Other sites in the quebrada have similar architecture to other Early and Middle Virú but without ceramic collections from these sites specifically they cannot be dated.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Willey (1953: fig. 43) only mapped the main structure and this shows up very clearly on satellite imagery, but the additional terraces that Willey describes are also visible descending westward in single file down the hill. The main structure and all contiguous terraces are mapped as one site. This includes several small rooms built on the quebrada floor rather than terraces and apparently better-preserved than the terraces, but likely contemporary with them.

V-229
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.135 ha
Location: 8.3679° S, 78.6865° W
Description: This site is a series of small structures, each with a few rooms, located on the rocky floor of a small quebrada on the north margin of the Huacapongo Valley, approximately 200 m northwest of V-228. An out-of-use canal—probably an archaeological feature but possibly used in modern times—cuts through the site but Willey (1953: 118) was not sure whether it cut through existing buildings and he apparently did not associate it with this site. One structure has 5-6 rooms and two raised banquettes and the largest structure had 9 rooms, but there are no clear patterns or arrangements to the structures. The site is clearly residential and its location on the valley floor is not defensive. Several large undocumented sites are located on the hill spurs and slopes farther up the quebrada and that form its western arm but it is not possible to determine whether these were contemporary or associated with V-229. The site was heavily damaged by El Niño floods when Willey surveyed it and when I visited the site on November 11, 2010 it was so heavily damaged from flooding and from looting that I did not survey the site.

Willey dated this site to both Early and Middle Virú—although he considered the site abandoned and later re-occupied—and the present seriation agrees with this, though seeing continual use rather than abandonment.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Despite heavy damage and poor satellite imagery, the site as Willey (1953: fig. 24) mapped it is clearly visible. The site does appear to be slightly larger than what Willey mapped, however.

V-230
Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú
Type: Civic
Size: 0.34 ha
Location: 8.3739° S, 78.6412° W

Description: V-230 is a square-shaped mound with 60 m sides located just south of the Huacapongo River and about 1300 m east and upstream from the town of Huacapongo (Willey 2953: 89), in the region of the lower Huacapongo Valley where the river takes a sharp northward turn and cuts a narrow ravine through the mountains. The mound varies from 1.5-3 m in height and clearly has a civic function because this amount of construction to add height is not typical of residential sites in Huacapongo. The mound is covered with boulders and Willey observed some hints of room arrangements on the mound summit, though these were too damaged to identify with certainty. There are lower aprons surrounding the mound at least on two sides. A small canal surrounds much of the mound and Willey associated this canal with the mound. Ford (archives) noted 3-4 looted burials on the surface of the mound. I surveyed this site on October 5, 2010 but have little to add to Willey’s description. My camera was stolen that evening before I could back up the day’s photos so I do not have any photos of this site.

The mound is 275 m west-southwest from V-200 (undated) and a kilometer southwest of the core of the Upper Huacapongo Cluster but there are no other documented sites near to V-230. There are several possibly mounds that have not been surveyed, however.

Willey dated the site to Early and Late Virú. Early Virú sherds were more common around the base of the mound and sherds that Willey dated to Late Virú appeared to be associated with looted burials on the mound surface, leading Willey to suggest that this site was built during
the Early Virú Period and later reused as a cemetery. The present seriation shows continual use during both the Early and Middle Virú periods, however, with no Late Virú component.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey did not map this site specifically and his description is generic enough to make it difficult to be entirely certain that I have relocated the correct site. I map a squarish mound with slightly smaller dimensions than Willey described because this is the only good match for this site in the area, and I am fairly confident that I have relocated the correct site.

**V-231 (Virú Viejo)**

*Time period(s):* Middle and Late Virú  
*Type:* Castillo Fortification Complex  
*Size:* 0.859 ha  
*Location:* 8.4111° S, 78.7292° W

**Description:** Virú Viejo is a rock outcrop near the south margin of the Virú Valley at the west entrance to the valley neck. The mound is located near the south/southwest entrance to the valley neck such that anyone passing from the coast along the south side of the valley would first pass Huaca Santa Clara (V-67), a major administrative centre and castillo, and then pass Virú Viejo, or anyone coming from the highlands would pass the valley neck and then pass Virú Viejo. Virú Viejo is two kilometers northeast of Huaca Santa Clara and these two are the only major isolated hills or rock outcrops in this area of the valley, and the valley margins here are gradual sandy slopes and not steep hills unlike the setting of the other castillo fortification complexes (e.g. V-51, described above). This site is also clearly intervisible with the Tomaval and Napo castillos, which are both approximately two kilometres farther inland on opposite margins of the valley. Perhaps of significance, this castillo is located in such a way that it has very good views of both the entire middle and much of the lower valley, and of the entire valley neck. While Huaca Santa Clara has a better view of lower Virú its view of the valley neck is somewhat limited, and the other four castillos have a complete view of the valley neck but little to no view of middle or lower Virú. Virú Viejo appears to be built in a very strategic location.

Willey estimated the Virú Viejo hill to be 200 m x 320 m and to have a height of at least 20 m (1953: 175). The hill runs southwest-northeast with a long, gradual ridge climbing from the southwest to its highest point at the northeast, with steep, sand-covered sides all around this peak. The actual castillo complex is much smaller than the hill but occupies this high peak such that its location is defensive and difficult-to-access, but also overlooks the valley with a great deal of monumentality.

Willey did not map this site and his description of it is quite general. Peruvian archaeologist Estuardo La Torre, who assisted me during my survey in 2010 and who has extensive experience excavating at Huaca Santa Clara (V-67) nick-named this site “Santa Clara Chiquita” for its extensive similarities to the larger site. La Torre noted similar architecture to Santa Clara—most notably a mix of cane-marked and triangular adobes—and felt that this site was built in a very similar way and dated to the same periods. This leads me to suggest that Virú Viejo was built as an outpost for Huaca Santa Clara or that the two sites were closely related.

The main structure of the castillo is a terraced pyramid mound with dimensions of 13 m x 32 m made of adobe and rock, with a stone foundation and adobe bulk (Willey 1953: 175). When
I surveyed the site I had the impression that the main bulk of the mound was built of rock-and-earth fill with an adobe façade. It is not clear where these rocks came from; loose boulders like those commonly used for structures on the valley margins and in the Huacapongo Valley are not found on this hill and the nearby valley margins are essentially large sand dunes without exposed rock, so the stone used for this mound must have been brought from a distance of at least a few kilometers. Willey noted that the mound rose approximately 4 m higher than the part of the hill it was built on but because of its hilltop location the height of actual construction was difficult to assess and the mound took advantage of the natural topography to add height to it. Willey argued that this site was older than the other castillos and that it was the precursor to those, in part because it lacked some structures common to the other castillos (though Willey recognized that this could be due to the topography of the hill) but also because he dated it to earlier within the Middle Virú Period, using ceramic criteria that can no longer be considered valid (see chapter 3).

Willey did not describe any residential component to the site but there were clearly residential terraces descending the northeast side of the hill (some domestic refuse on the slopes was likely washed down from above), as well as a 20 m x 20 m residential area at the top of the hill just below the mound. During my survey of the site on October 21, 2010 I noted abundant domestic ware sherds, chipped lithic flakes and cores, layers of *in situ* vegetal material exposed by looter’s pits, and at least one llama corral (although this could be from later re-use of the site). On the domestic terraces I observed diagnostic Middle Virú corporate ware sherds (one Carmelo Negative sherd and one Callejón-style kaolin sherd) as well as diagnostic Late Virú corporate ware sherds (Moche/Huancaco style). This fits with the current reseriation of Ford’s ceramic collection from the site; whereas Willey dated this site only to the Middle Virú Period, the current seriation dates it to both Middle and Late Virú. The Castillo itself was likely built during the Middle Virú Period and the residential sectors of the site date to both Middle and Late Virú. This site was clearly a large complex with a mixed civic, fortification, and residential function, fitting the definition of Castillo fortification complexes.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The actual ruins of this site are not visible on satellite imagery and Willey did not map this site but there is a distinct colour and texture change on the northeast part of the hill compared to the rest of the hill due to the weathering of adobe structures. I have mapped the extent of this colour change as being the site.

**V-232 (Virú Viejo Cemetery)**

*Time period(s):* Middle Virú through Late Epoch  
*Type:* Funerary  
*Size:* 0.781 ha  
*Location:* 8.4127° S, 78.729° W  
*Description:* This is a small cemetery on a natural sand dune or hill approximately 50 m south of the base of the Virú Viejo hill. Modern houses and a large wall sit on top of the hill. The cemetery is approximately 50 m x 175 m but relatively graves had been excavated (Willey 1953: 230). Willey observed plain rectangular adobes scattered around the site and interpreted these as tomb linings for the graves rather than as evidence of residential structures. It is possible, though not confirmed, that this cemetery was used by the people who lived in the residential sectors of Virú Viejo. Willey dated the site to Late Virú but the present seriation indicates that it was used from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.
Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The site itself can be relocated with confidence since it is the only hill just south of Virú Viejo and Willey’s size description for this site closely match the length and width of the top of the small hill. Furthermore, looter’s pits are somewhat visible on the hill over an area with an extent close to what Willey described. A polygon with Willey’s dimensions for this site is drawn over this area.

V-233
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 1.581 ha
Location: 8.4352° S, 78.7533° W
Description: V-233 is a mounded site in the Middle Virú Valley near the south margin of the valley and a short distance east of the Panamerican Highway. Unfortunately there is a typographic error on this page of Willey (1953: 202) that has left two partial sentences. In one of these Willey mentioned something about a 12 m x 14 m summit platform; it appears that Willey described this platform as being the central focus of the site, with a surrounding mound (80 m x 200 m) rising 7 m above the fields surrounding the site. It is not clear what this mound is but Willey apparently did not consider it a pyramid mound and did not ascribe a civic/ceremonial or civic function to this site; it is impossible to tell from satellite imagery alone whether this site does have such a function. Willey observed adobe platform constructions in places, and the site had a large, flat summit, though lacked evidence of structures in the exact centre. Willey also surmised, though did not demonstrate, that the site was built on a natural dune or hillock and Ford (archives) thought that this site consisted entirely of refuse. For these reasons, I ascribe this site a purely residential function.

Both Ford and Willey noted looted burials at this site and the site has a reasonably large collection of Late Epoch corporate wares, possibly dating the burials (see Appendix A, Table 2). Willey dated the residential component of the site to the Late Virú Period based on a large domestic ware collection but the present seriation indicates that it was in use from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. There are few dunes, hills, or sites in this area of the valley that fit Willey’s description for this site and so this mound can be relocated with confidence. No archaeological structures can be seen on this mound but there are several visible looter’s pits. Modern structures are located on the site and a paved road cuts across one edge of it.

V-234
Time period(s): Early Virú, Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.395 ha
Location: 8.4328° S, 78.7502° W
Description: Willey (1953: 91) describes this as a salitre (a variant of saltpeter common in the soil of lower Virú) or refuse heap, possibly with a natural sand dune core, with evidence of a domestic residence in the form of ash, ceramic sherd, and shell. The ovate mound is 3.25 m
high, 60 m x 80 m in extent, and oriented southwest-northeast. Both Willey and Ford specifically note that there is no evidence of looting or exposed graves here. Willey dated the site to Early Virú and the Late Epoch and the current seriation agrees with this.

Mapping accuracy: Good. There are two mounds (separated by 100 m) close to the point where Willey located this site on the master valley map that both fit the general description in terms of their shape and orientation. One of these is slightly smaller than the dimensions that Willey described and has evidence of extensive looting activity while the other fits the size and has no looting activity, but modern houses on it appear to have deformed its shape somewhat. This larger mound is mapped as the site; there are no other nearby features that fit Willey’s description. Presumably one of these two mounds was simply not registered as an archaeological site.

Interestingly, V-233 and these two mounds form a line with a large natural sand dune that (with evidence of looting activity but not documented by Willey as a site) approximately one kilometre northeast of V-234. That these features are all in line supports the argument that V-233 and V-234 were built on natural sand dunes. V-238, a large site built on a natural sand dune to the southwest, also falls on this same line of dunes.

V-235 (Taitacantin)

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú, Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 6.056 ha
Location: 8.4309° S, 78.7686° W

Description: Taitacantin is one of the largest sand dunes in the central part of the Virú Valley and it has attracted the attention of various researchers (Bennett 1939; Kroeber 1930; Willey 1953). The dune is 4-5 m high and around 900 m long and 330 m wide at its maximum and oriented southwest-northeast, and with pointed ends (Willey 1953: 125). The southwest point cuts across the Panamerican Highway, which allows this site to be identified with certainty. Willey surveyed and collected ceramics from an area of approximately 100 m x 40 m at the highest point of the site, which he identified as an occupation area, but he also noted burials on other parts of the dune and thought that Bennett (1939) and Kroeber (1930) surveyed other areas of the dune because their descriptions and dating of the site differed somewhat from his own, but these other researchers were not explicit about where they surveyed. It is likely that most of the dune was occupied, but it is difficult to determine whether the entire dune was occupied contemporaneously with the area that Willey surveyed, nor whether there were gaps between occupied areas that would indicate smaller sites located on the same dune, as is seen with some other large dunes in the valley. Given these concerns, I only consider the roughly 100 m x 400 m central area that Willey surveyed to be the site, at least as it was occupied during the Early and Middle Virú Periods.

A community of around 100 modern houses sites on the site; past satellite imagery available in Google Earth shows that this community is growing considerably, starting around the lower edges of the dune and climbing into its centre such that only an area of approximately 130 m x 150 m was unoccupied in 2013, and this area is ploughed and cultivated. I attempted to visit the site in 2010 but could not access it due to these structures. These structures make it
difficult to observe any archaeological features on the dune (although imagery dating to 2005 shows considerably less occupation and reveals some evidence of looting activity).

Willey (1953: 125) noted scattered adobes and considered this to be a residential site rather than a mound with a community or civic/ceremonial function. He did not go into detail on the nature of construction but presumably the site was largely an accumulation of domestic refuse on a natural dune. Willey dated the site to the Middle Virú Period and, based on Bennett’s (1939) survey, the Late Epoch. Based on the present survey, Ford and Willey’s ceramic collection dates this site to both Early and Middle Virú. I accept Bennett’s Late Epoch date as well; this late occupation may be primarily a cemetery, and Ford identified Late Epoch corporate wares at the site (see Appendix A Table 2).

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. The dune itself can be clearly relocated. Ford and Willey only collected ceramics from a relatively small area of the dune at its highest point, but he did not describe where on the mound this was. I have mapped a dark stained area visible on satellite imagery—possibly indicative of domestic refuse—at the centre of the mound as the site, but this map is largely based on Willey’s description of the habitation area that he and Ford surveyed and collected ceramics from.

V-236
Time period(s): Early Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Size: 0.752 ha
Location: 8.4361° S, 78.7703° W

Description: This site is located on a stabilized sand dune in the southern part of the lower Virú Valley, approximately 200 m south of the southwest point of Taitacantin (V-235). There is a midden made of accumulated earth at the highest point of the dune and domestic ware ceramics were scattered over an area with a diameter of approximately 100 m around this high point (Willey 1953: 91). Ford (archives) noted some burials and there is evidenced of a small amount of looting activity visible on satellite imagery, but Willey noted that evidence of Prehispanic occupation was scant outside of the area where the ceramic collection was made. Willey dated the site to Early Virú, Late Virú, and the Late Epoch, but the present seriation shows continual use from Early Virú through the Late Epoch. Occupation here was probably very limited in extent but there were likely always a few residential structures here, and there are two modern houses on the site today.

Mapping accuracy: Good. The site itself can be relocated with a good degree of certainty by reference to other known sites, as shown on the master valley map. Willey did not describe the size of this dune or the exact size of the site, and did not describe where on the kidney-shaped mound the actual site was located. I have drawn a polygon with a diameter of ~100 m, placed over an area with some looter’s pits, as the site.

V-237
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Residential
Jordan T. Downey (2015)

Size: 1.245 ha
Location: 8.4426° S, 78.7722° W
Description: Similar to V-233, described above, this site consists of adobe constructions, domestic refuse, and a summit platform of 20 m x 35 m forming a mound that rises ~6-7 m above the fields, possibly built on a natural dune or hillock (Willey 1953: 203). The site is the lower Virú Valley three kilometres south of the river and 500 m west of V-238. Willey noted evidence of looted burials and there is a relatively large quantity of Moche/Huancaco-style and Late Epoch-style corporate ware sherds, as well as one sherd of Callejon-style corporate ware, diagnostic of the Middle Virú Period (see Appendix A, Table 2). However the bulk of the site appears to be residential in function and Willey did not describe the summit platform as a pyramid mound or ascribe it a civic/ceremonial or community function. Willey dated the site to Late Virú but the present seriation indicates a continual occupation from Middle Virú through the Late Epoch.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. There are few sites in this part of the valley and not many natural dunes of a significant size, and as such this site can be relocated by reference to other nearby sites and landscape features shown on Willey’s master valley map. Willey did not describe the size of this site but I remain confident that I have relocated the correct one. There are modern structures and a road on this mound. No archaeological structures can be discerned on satellite imagery but there is considerable evidence of looting activity.

V-238 (Huaca Larga)
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 1.637 ha
Location: 8.4432° S, 78.7676° W
Description: Huaca Larga is built on a very large sand dune (approximately 2 km long and varying 200-300 m wide according to Willey’s description but the southern parts of the dune have obviously been ploughed over more recently) in the lower south valley, approximately 1.5 km south of V-235, Taitacantin (Willey 1953: 125). Willey observed middens and domestic refuse in various parts of the hill, but also noted that many areas had no evidence of Prehispanic occupations. Willey and Ford surveyed an area with a radius of approximately 100 m around the highest point of the hill. Willey (1953: 126) described this location as being “slightly north of the total dune mass.” At this location, Willey observed scattered adobes and evidence of a 100 m x 200 m rectangular adobe platform.

Willey’s description is vague but I am reasonably confident that I relocated this area when I surveyed the site on October 29, 2010. Willey referenced Krober’s (1930) survey at this location as evidence that there are later occupations and cemeteries on other parts of the mound, but Willey dated this platform to Middle Virú alone and the current seriation agrees with this. Actual adobe structures do not appear on satellite imagery but there is evidence of looting activity scattered about the hill. During my survey I observed two discrete clusters of domestic refuse; one area, on the west end of the mound near its centre contained a variety of domestic refuse and some looted graves (described below. This appears to be the area that Willey surveyed) and a second cluster towards the north end of the hill that contained Late Epoch
domestic ware sherds and burials. I have mapped this site as being an area 100 m x 200 m around the first cluster.

Willey (1953: 126) described the main structure at this site as being a large adobe platform at least 1 m thick built on top of the natural dune. Willey was hesitant to ascribe the mound a community or civic/ceremonial function without excavation and so described it as a residential platform. Domestic refuse is abundant here. During my survey I observed a scatter of shell and vegetal refuse covering a large area and a wide variety of material culture. Thick domestic ware sherds from pots, jars, and ollas were common as were some finer domestic wares (I was not able to identify sherds to specific types during this survey). Chipped lithic cores and flakes were very abundant; the majority of these were made from a local black basalt that naturally occurs as alluvial cobbles throughout the valley but there was also one scraper or spokeshave made of a high-quality black chalcedony. Grinding stone tools and hammerstones were also common. Llama hair was common and there was evidence of a llama corral on the site, but this could represent a later re-use of the site. Other artifacts observed included textiles, several pieces of copper, ceramic beads, a gourd fragment, and a ground slate pendant, but there were large looter’s pits on the site and these textiles and ornamental artifacts could have come from looted intrusive burials (although the abundance and variety of artifacts at this site was rare in our survey despite encountering looted burials frequently). Without further research at this site I ascribe it a residential function but the platform mound and artifacts indicate that there could have been some civic space here alongside a large residential occupation.

Mapping accuracy: Good. The Huaca Larga hill itself can be easily identified but Willey did not make it clear exactly where he conducted his survey of the site. I located an area of the hill in 2010 that fit Willey’s description reasonably well and have mapped an area of 100 m x 200 m around this area. There are modern structures on the site but these are concentrated at the south end of the mound and, apart from one large compound, do not impact the site itself, which is located on the north part of the mound.

V-239

Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic-Ceremonial Centre
Size: 0.519 ha
Location: 8.4272° S, 78.7817° W

Description: This site consists of three mounds connected by aprons. The tallest mound is a true pyramid mound or huaca and as such can be considered civic space, but the other two mounds are less clear. These two mounds have either been destroyed by modern houses on the site and the nearby Panamerican Highway or at least have been impacted significantly by these structures and are not visible on satellite imagery and could not be access when I surveyed this site in 2010. It is not clear if there are residential occupations between the mounds as Willey does not describe this and only collected ceramics from the main mound, and the entire area save for the main mound is covered with houses making survey difficult. However, based on Willey’s description, I view the site as a sort of U-shaped centre and consider it a civic-ceremonial centre.

Willey (1953: 147-148) did not map this site but his description of it is clear. The main mound is located at the south edge of the site with a modern canal running just below it. This is located approximately 500 m south of the Virú bridge of the Panamerican Highway and 200 m
southwest of the highway itself. The main mound is 11.9 m high with a summit of 12 m x 22 m and an overall extent of 22 m x 32 m. The mound has been heavily damaged by various excavations; these excavations reveal that the mound was made entirely of cane-marked adobes and was made as a single structure rather than through gradual accretion. Willey hypothesized that the mound was originally a terraced or stepped-pyramid. There is a 23 m x 32 m apron (2-3 m high) on the northeast side of the mound and Willey described this as extending like wings on either side of the main mound, with the wings being higher than the centre of the apron. Willey observed plastered walls in excavations in the centre of the apron and hypothesized that there were large rooms on the apron. A 3 m-high mound lies 50 m to the northeast (Willey places this as being adjacent to and cut by the Panamerican Highway, but the highway today is 200 m from the main mound. There are several structures in this area, however, that have likely destroyed this small mound) and a larger 3 m-high mound lies 25 m to the northwest (also damaged by modern structures). Taken together, these mounds give the impression of forming a small U-shaped structure with the main mound at the base of the U, a plaza with a possible sunken platform in front of this mound, and two smaller mounds as the wings. Willey did not describe any residential occupations or domestic refuse on these mounds, supporting my argument that this site is entirely a civic structure.

Willey collected ceramics only from the main mound and the attached apron. A wooden shrine was located on top of the main mound and today this shrine has a concrete base that takes up most of the summit of the mound, making survey of the mound difficult.

Mapping accuracy: Good. The main mound of V-239 can be relocated and mapped with certainty but the outlying mounds and apron that Willey described cannot be seen on satellite imagery because of modern structures on the site, and although Willey described their location relative to one another, he never described the overall extent of this site. I map the approximate overall extent of the site based on Willey’s descriptions.

V-240 (Mochan or Huaca Amarilla)
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic-Ceremonial Centre
Size: 0.597 ha
Location: 8.4276° S, 78.8119° W
Description: Mochan or Huaca Amarilla is a large, tall adobe pyramid mound with multiple platforms in lower Virú, approximately 600 m north of the present-day course of the Virú River and approximately 3 km downstream from the bridge that carries the Panamerican Highway over the river. The site is on a natural terrace that is likely a very ancient river bank and a relic bend in the river reaches as close as 300 m from the site, but it is not clear if the site was associated with the river at all. The structure has steep, sheer sides rising to a maximum height of 20 m (there is evidence that the sides were originally terraced or stepped), making this huaca a truly monumental, impressive structure. Willey (1953: 148, fig. 31) describes and maps this structure clearly and is a good source for more specific descriptions. This site is the largest civic building between Huaca Santa Clara and Huaca Gallinazo and is located relatively close to, and conspicuously visible from, several contemporary sites in the central and lower valley. This mound likely served as a local huaca or civic-ceremonial centre. This site is well-preserved and
would be a good site for excavations aimed at revealing the nature of community activities at a secondary or tertiary civic-ceremonial structure.

The overall structure is approximately 50 m x 100 m and is L-shaped (Willey 1953: 149). The summit of the mound is divided into three platforms. The highest is 20 m above the ground level and is 18 m x 30 m, and adjacent to it is a 16 m high platform with an extent of 14 m x 30 m. There is no evidence of structures on top of either of these mounds but a small, lower terrace (7 m x 9 m) is attached to the side of the lower platform and this terrace does have evidence of room foundations (Willey 1953: 150). The lowest main platform is attached to the southeast side of the secondary platform and is 10.5 m high with dimensions of 15 m x 30 m. On the south side of this lowest platform Willey noted well-preserved steps or terraces that ran along this platform and attached to the highest platform as well, and the base of the mound in the vicinity of this platform had a well-preserved 3 m high wall. These features did not appear to be as well-preserved when I visited this site in 2009 and 2010, but damage in this part of the mound reveals that it is made entirely of adobes. There is a possible wall or older façade exposed that, if confirmed, would indicate that the structure was built in multiple stages or that the smallest, lowest platform was built first and then the bulk of the structure was added later, but the majority of exposed construction evidence points to one large building event. The summits of the mound are well-preserved with relatively few looter’s pits. The structure appears to be entirely artificial and there is no evidence that it was built on a natural dune or hillock, unlike most sites in Virú.

Interestingly, during my survey in 2010 I noticed a staircase on the northwest side of the mound leading summit of the highest platform down the northwest face of the mound, but did not extend straight down the mound and may have followed terraces that are now eroded. Willey did not describe this staircase. Preserved yellow, red, and possibly white paint are present on exposed sections of the plastered façade on either side of this staircase. No clear patterns could be discerned on these walls but only small sections are exposed. Later re-plastering and/or expansion or repair of the structure covered up at least some of these walls. One wall has a mix of red and yellow paint mixed randomly with no apparent patterns and I interpreted this as being a repainting (red) over the original yellow wall. It is possible that excavations were conducted at this site by the archaeological project associated with the Chavi-Mochic irrigation project and that this staircase and these walls were exposed then, but any information pertaining to their project is difficult to locate. This staircase likely featured prominently in whatever ceremonies were conducted at this site but there is no visible evidence of mounds, plazas, or residential structures in the area north of this mound, although the fields there are inaccessible and have been heavily modified by agricultural activity and some structures, and I did not survey them.

Apart from the small terrace attached to the second-highest platform, the only other part of the site with evidence of room structures was at the base of structure on the northeast side. Willey (1953: 150) noted an area of approximately 7 m x 40 m on this part of the mound with structures that Willey considered to be house-structures. For this reason this mound can be considered a civic-ceremonial structure rather than a purely civic building with no attached residential sector. It is possible that a larger residential sector is associated with this mound but due to modern agricultural fields and an orchard, erosion along the riverbank, and a modern house just south of the site, these areas could not be surveyed. Because it lacks apparent large plazas or residential structures, as presently mapped this site is small as far as civic-ceremonial centres go but this should not obscure the fact that the main structure itself is one of the largest and highest single structures in Virú.
I observed few artifacts or ecofacts during my surveys of the site although Ford did collect a fairly large assemblage of domestic ware ceramics. Willey dated the site entirely to Middle Virú and the present seriation agrees with this date.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent.

V-250
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.155 ha
Location: 8.4265° S, 78.8294° W

Description: This mound is fairly small at 30 m x 60 m but it is steep and attains a height of 3.5 m (Willey 1953: 126). Willey notes that the mound is one of a group but this is the only one surveyed or described and ceramic information is not available for the others so I only consider this mound as part of a single site. Willey considered the possibility that this mound was built as a pyramid mound, and therefore was monumental in nature and had a civic function, but he suggested that it was more likely it was a collection of adobe-walled house structures built on top of a natural dune, although actual room patterns were not seen. Willey dated the residential component of the site to Middle Virú with a cemetery and possibly continued residential use during the Late Virú Period. Re-seriation of the domestic ware ceramic component dates this site purely to the Middle Virú Period but there is a large Moche/Huancaco-style corporate ware assemblage (see Appendix A, Table 2) that confirms Willey’s suggestion that the site was used as a cemetery in the Late Virú Period.

While the Middle Virú occupation of this site appears to be entirely domestic in nature, I observed evidence of spondylus shell working at this site during my survey on November 17, 2010. I recovered nine pieces of spondylus of varying sizes and that appeared to be in various stages of bead working. The presence of spondylus, or thorny oyster, is itself significant because this much-desired seashell is not local to the north coast of Peru. Some pieces still had their thorny spines on them while others had been cut, seemingly preparing for bead production. There were no complete shells and no finished beads recovered, as might be expected if these were burial objects, and the spondylus was not clearly associated with any looter’s pit or the backdirt from a burial. While it is unlikely that such unfinished objects would be burial goods, it could be argued that the person buried was a bead-maker and was buried with some unfinished objects of their craft, but this also seems unlikely since these objects were in close association with each other but were not apparently associated with any burial. I hypothesize that there was a spondylus bead workshop on the site and date it to Middle Virú since the domestic occupation of the site dates entirely to this time period. If this hypothesis is confirmed then I suggest that this workshop was part of a small cottage industry rather than a large-scale workshop. Excavation to reveal evidence of spondylus working from a secure context would clarify these hypotheses.

Mapping accuracy: Good. In my 2010 survey I attempted to locate this site. The mound that I surveyed near where Willey located this site fit his description closely and had similar artifacts to Ford’s collection (i.e. abundant domestic wares and a good deal of Moche/Huancaco-style corporate wares, both of which I observed). For these reasons I am confident that I located the correct mound. There are several other undocumented mounds in the vicinity of this site but I do not map these since surveys are required to establish their age.
V-266
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Midden
Size: 1.974 ha
Location: 8.4576° S, 78.8932° W
Description: Willey (1953: 120) very briefly describes this site as a shell midden in the open dune lands that border the cultivated fields and the beach. Willey did not describe the size of this midden. There are agricultural fields, natural sand dunes, and, in some of the satellite images available in Google Earth, a large white feature in the vicinity of this site as Willey mapped its location on the master valley map. Given that this is a shell midden and surface shell in Virú is generally sun-bleached to a bright white colour, I interpret this feature as the site. V-283 (described below) appears similarly—although less brightly—on satellite imagery and I have surveyed this site and confirmed that it was a shell midden. This feature appears to have been ploughed over in recent years and the site may be obliterated. Willey noted that there was no architectural refuse associated with this site but there were domestic ware sherds that he dated to Middle Virú, and the current seriation agrees with this date. Presumably this site was used for processing mollusks during the Middle Virú period, perhaps for trade to sites farther inland. If this interpretation is correct it is conceivable that this site had a very limited full-time residence (if any) but was visited occasionally by people from other parts of the valley. I have also observed similar shell middens in this back-beach landscape that are entirely Pre-Ceramic; it is possible that this site also had a Pre-Ceramic component, but excavation is required to test this.
Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey did not describe this site or its location in any detail. There is one large feature near the point where Willey mapped this site that is visible as a bright white area on satellite imagery, as is expected from a site with abundant surface shell. I map this feature as the site. Other similar features are visible on the local landscape; some of these are clearly sand dunes (or dunes with a shell midden on top) but some appear to be salt ponds or salitre, salt-laden earth found commonly near the coast in Virú.

V-267
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Midden
Size: 0.265 ha
Location: 8.464° S, 78.885° W
Description: This site is a 40 m x 100 m midden in the lower north valley (Willey 1953: 201). The midden is on a low natural sand dune and consists of crushed shell. Extensive white shell middens are typically visible on satellite imagery in the lower valley. There is an area near where Willey depicted this site that roughly fits with the dimensions that Willey described but there are also several other similar areas in the vicinity although Willey only documented one site here. Agricultural activity has partially ploughed through or over these areas but the one that I map as this site appears to be relatively intact. Willey dated this site to the Late Virú Period but the current seriation dates it to Middle Virú.
Mapping accuracy: Good. There are several areas near where Willey located this site that appear as possible white shell middens on satellite imagery. I map the closest one to Willey’s location, and this fits reasonably well with the described size of this site.

V-270
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.088 ha
Location: 8.4384° S, 78.8153° W
Description: This is a very small mound (15 m x 25 m and 2.5 m high) located on a river terrace just south of the river in the lower Virú Valley (Willey 1953: 129). Willey noted tapia or ball adobes on the mound summit, making it clear that the mound was at least partially constructed and not entirely natural. He arbitrarily classified it as a “Dwelling-Construction Mound,” his term for a constructed mound with architectural evidence but that was not a pyramid mound (i.e. monumental architecture or civic space) but felt that it could have been an isolated pyramid mound. Given its small size and low height, however, I agree that he was more justified in considering it a residential mound without evidence of civic space. Willey dated the site to Middle Virú based on a moderate-sized domestic ware ceramic collection and the present seriation agrees with this date.

Mapping accuracy: Good. There is a small mound that fits Willey’s description for this site near where he located it on the master valley map. This mound is slightly larger than what Willey described (18 m x 40 m), but there are no other similar mounds in this vicinity and I map this as the site.

V-271
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.076 ha
Location: 8.4348° S, 78.8253° W
Description: This is a small 1.6 m high mound that Willey described as being circular with a diameter of 20 m, with a similar mound 20 m to the south (1953: 222). Looter’s pits revealed domestic refuse and sherds extending at least 1 m below the surface of the mound and it is clear that it is a residential site. These mounds are located near the town of Santa Elena on the north side of the river in lower Virú. Ford (archives) dated the site to the Middle Virú Period based on the relatively small ceramic assemblage but Willey, for unknown reasons, dated the site to Late Virú. Re-seriation shows the Middle Virú date is correct.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey only described this site as being located “south and east of Hacienda Santa Elena” (the hacienda town is still called Santa Elena). He did not describe its location relative to the several other sites in the vicinity, which are shown a short distance to the south on the master map of all sites. Willey located this site as being just east of a major bend in the road between Santa Elena and the Panamerican Highway, and this road appears to still be in the same location as it was in the 1940s. There is a possible single mound near this location with
trees and a modern house built on it (making it difficult to observe on satellite), but nothing that follows Willey’s description of two small mounds separated by a short distance. I have drawn a polygon over the possible mound with a modern house on it near where Willey mapped the site’s location, but it is entirely possible that Willey’s label for this site on the map was shifted considerably to accommodate the other sites in this vicinity.

**Santa Elena Cluster (V-272, V-302, V-306, V-307, V-308, V-309)**

**Time period(s):**
- V-272: Guañape to Early Virú
- V-302: Pre-Ceramic through Late Virú
- V-306: Guañape through Middle Virú
- V-307: Undated. Probably Guañape to Early Virú
- V-308: Undated. Probably Guañape to Early Virú
- V-309: Guañape to Early Virú

**Type:** Residential

**Size:**
- V-272: 0.086 ha
- V-302: 0.164 ha
- V-306: 0.126 ha
- V-307: Unmapped
- V-308: Unmapped
- V-309: 0.133 ha

**Location:** 8.436° S, 78.8284° W (V-272); 8.4389° S, 78.8312° W (V-302); 8.4465° S, 78.8802° W (V-303); 8.4373° S, 78.8293° W (V-306); 8.439° S, 78.829° W (V-309)

**Description:** In a field just southeast of Santa Elena there is a cluster of several mounds. Ford and Willey first surveyed these mounds and identified several surface assemblages that appeared to represent the transition from the Guañape Period to Early Virú, leading Collier (1955) to return to the area to conduct excavations to investigate this transition. Several of these mounds are contemporary and so I have grouped them together as a cluster (the sites studied by Collier), but site V-273 (which Willey dated to Middle Virú but the present seriation dates to Late Virú) in the same field is itself a group of 6-8 mounds in a roughly rectangular pattern covering an area of 100 m x 225 m (Willey 1953: 129). Site V-274 (described below) is just west of this cluster but is a similar mound, though it dates only to Middle Virú. Site V-271 (described above) is shown by Willey as being just north of this cluster, but its precise location cannot be established. There are other mounds in the vicinity that do not fit the description for any of these mounds and as such are likely undocumented.

Needless to say, with such a cluster of mounds in close proximity—and some mounds have appear to have been heavily disturbed since Willey’s study and others may have been entirely destroyed by modern agricultural activity—it is difficult to determine which mound is
which. Willey did not map any of these sites specifically and only occasionally made reference to their precise location relative to one another. Willey’s extremely general description of V-273 further compounds the problems in mapping these sites as this adds several undescribed mounds to the fields. Collier (1955: fig. 38) mapped site V-272 and did describe the location of most of these sites relative to each other and relative to landscape features (these features can still be identified and appear to be in the same location today as they were in the 1940s) with considerably greater precision than Willey, and his descriptions largely complement Willey’s, but Collier did not discuss the mounds of V-273 at all and his and Willey’s descriptions for the distances between mounds do not correspond to the mounds that are visible through Google Earth and ArcGIS satellite imagery. In sum, it is difficult to establish the locations of these sites and I am forced to assume that Willey and Collier made errors in describing the distance between mounds. I map the visible mounds that match the descriptions of V-272, V-302, V-306, and V-309 as closely as possible, effectively disregarding Willey’s and Collier’s descriptions of their relative locations. Because these sites are all in close proximity this does not affect the spatial analysis part of my project to any great degree but caution should be taken by any future researchers who wish to visit these sites.

The Santa Elena Cluster is a series of earth refuse or salitre mounds. All of the mounds are fairly similar in that they are low mounds of varying sizes apparently made by the gradual accumulation of earth, salitre, and midden refuse rather than being adobe structures or natural dunes/hills topped with adobe structures, like many other mound sites. Salitre, a variant of saltpeter, is abundant in the soil in the low-lying flat lands stretching for several kilometers back from the beach in lower Virú. Since crops cannot grow in this salt-laden soil, people worked to clear it from the agricultural fields and pile it on natural dunes or to create mounds, and these mounds were then frequently occupied (Collier 1955: 79; Ford and Willey 1949: 26). Most likely these mounds grew in a tell-like manner from the repeated accumulation of salitre soil, domestic refuse, and razed structures. Referring to V-272, Collier (1955: 80) notes that no evidence of house residential structures were located at the site and he felt that domestic refuse there indicated a midden, with houses being located elsewhere. He conceded, however, that his excavations were of limited extent and that other excavations could produce evidence of small, temporary cane-walled structures similar to structures that Collier observed in the area in the 1940s.

V-272 is 1.75 m high with gentle slopes and measures 30 m x 60 m (Collier 1955: 78). Collier locates the site at 550 m southeast of Santa Elena, 110 m southwest of the road from Santa Elena to the Panamerican Highway, and 950 m north of the Virú River. All of these features appear to be in the same location today, but it is not clear which points on these features Collier used to measure these distances. It is important to establish the location of this site because Collier uses it as a reference point for most other sites in the cluster. The only mound that can fit all three of these measurements is smaller than what Collier described for V-272, is more rectangular than the ovate-form that Collier (1955: fig. 38) mapped, and does not have the same alignment to north. Nevertheless, I think this likely is V-272 as the size difference, at least, can be explained by damage from modern irrigation canals in the area. Collier’s distance measurements to various features could be incorrect, however. V-302 is 3.5 m high and 40 m x 50 m (Collier 1955: 67). Collier locates it 110 m south-southwest of V-272. Willey (1953: 54) notes that this site is adjacent to a smaller L-shaped mound. Only one mound fits these descriptions but it is 440, south-southwest from the mound I consider to be V-272, and 250 m south-southeast from the nearest mound in that direction. I map this mound as V-302. V-306 is
ovate, 1 m high, 30 m x 40 m in extent, and 110 m southeast of V-272 (Collier 1955: 89; Willey 1953: 54). I map one mound that fits the basic description of this site, though is somewhat larger, but its location does not fit Collier’s description. V-309 is ovate-rectangular in form, 2 m high, 30 m x 45 m, and 160 m southeast-by-south from V-272 (Collier 1955: 90; Willey 1953: 54). I map one mound that fits the description of this mound but again does not fit Collier’s placement as to this site’s location. V-307 and V-308 are both very small and Collier (1955: 90) places them at 250 m and 280 m southeast-by-south from V-272, but these sites are not included in my analysis and are not mapped (see below).

Ford and Willey (1949; Willey 1953) originally made ceramic collections at V-272; by the present seriation this site dates to the Guanape Period and Early Virú. Later Collier (1955) returned to conduct additional surface collections and excavate stratigraphic trenches to establish the long-term occupational history at V-272 and the nearby mounds (not including the 6-8 mounds associated with V-273). Collier published his data and I converted these data into the format used in the present seriation. Collier made three stratigraphic cuts at V-272 but only the first was undisturbed and many of the sherds from this cut were lost prior to classification. Collier’s data for this site suffer from several problems but he argued that the site was occupied from Guanape to Early Virú and had intrusive Middle and Late Virú burials. There are too many problems with Collier’s excavation here, however, and I rely on Ford and Willey’s original surface collection.

Collier (1955: 67; see also Willey 1953: 54) conducted a surface collection at V-302 but this data was lost prior to classification. Collier’s excavation data at this site is secure, however, and demonstrates that the site was possibly first occupied during the Pre-Ceramic Period but was clearly occupied from Guanape through Middle Virú and then was used for intrusive Late Epoch burials. Collier’s (1955: 89-90) surface collections at V-306 and V-309 date to the Guanape and Early Virú Periods but excavations were not conducted here (Collier attempted an excavation at V-309 but this trench was heavily disturbed and was abandoned. Collier excavated four burials in this trench and dated them to the Middle Virú Period but the Castillo Plain, Gloria Polished Plain, and Castillo Modelled ceramics associated with these burials cannot be considered diagnostic of Middle Virú as they were also popular in Late Virú. Burial 4 at V-309 contains painted ceramics that Collier did not classify and might be diagnostic of Middle Virú; Collier 1955: 92). The artifacts from V-307 and V-308 were lost before analysis and no excavations were conducted at these sites. Collier noted that these collections were similar to the other mounds and that these sites were likely contemporary. I do not include V-307 or V-308 in my analysis.

Finally, although neither Collier nor Willey associated V-273 with these other mounds, Ford (archives) notes that the ceramic collection from V-273 came from only two of the 6-8 mounds, and these mounds are a short distance to the east of the Sana Elena cluster. It is entirely possible that some or all of these mounds are partially contemporary with the remainder of the cluster. It is also possible that some of these mounds date to the Pre-Ceramic Period. The area southeast of Santa Elena seems to have been an important early cluster of sites with some of the only Guanape Sites found anywhere in the valley. There are other groups or clusters of undocumented mounds in the lower valley but this area has a particularly dense concentration of them, and would be an interesting location to further study the nature of early settlement in Virú.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. See description above.
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.582 ha
Location: 8.4396° S, 78.8344° W
Description: V-274 is located approximately 400 m southwest of the Santa Elena Cluster and consists of two adjacent mounds that nearly touch at their bases. One mound is 30 m x 40 m and 3.1 m high while the second is 50 m x 75 m and 1.5 m high (Willey 1953: 129-130). Willey observed evidence of clay fill and possible adobes in open looter’s pits, but the site is likely a mix of earth and salitre piling and adobe structures and the site is clearly residential in nature. Willey dated the site to Middle Virú and the current seriation agrees with this.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Although Willey only described these mounds very generally and did not discuss their location relative to landscape features or other sites—apart from to note that it is 800 m west-southwest from V-273, which is itself difficult to relocate—there are two mounds separated by about 10 m of ploughed field near to where Willey showed this site on the master valley map. Each of these mounds fits the size described by Willey very well and so I consider these the correct mounds. These mounds have been somewhat impacted by modern agricultural activity but appear to be fairly well-preserved.

V-275
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Civic
Size: 0.223 ha
Location: 8.445° S, 78.835° W
Description: This is a small pyramid mound or civic structure without associated residential space located 100 m from the river in the lower north valley. It is approximately 1.5 km south of Santa Elena and thus is fairly close to the sites near there, but there is no clear association between this site and any other. Several undocumented mounds are located in the general vicinity of this site but since Willey never surveyed or discussed these it is not clear if they are contemporary with or associated with this site. I surveyed this site on November 17, 2010 and found that Willey’s description of it fit well with what I observed on the ground—save for the mound being somewhat smaller on the north-south access because the south side has sustained heavy damage, having been cut through by an irrigation canal—and I am therefore confident that I relocated the correct site.

Willey (1953: 153) describes this mound as being 35 m x 60 m in extent, 8.3 m high with steep sides, and having a two-level summit platform of 5 m x 10 m, with the lower platform sloping to the southwest. Because of its height and overall architecture Willey considered this to be a true pyramid mound or structure built with monumentality in mind; I consider it a civic structure as it was clearly built for a civic or ceremonial space but lacks the residential space that is typically associated with true civic-ceremonial centres. The damage at the south side of the mound, apparently not present when Willey surveyed the site, reveals that the mound was built as a single structure using rectangular adobes (in fact there was a pile of rectangular adobes in the damaged part of the site when I surveyed it. Presumably locals were taking adobes from the structure to build their own homes).
I observed domestic ware sherds on the site but it did not show abundant ceramics and Ford’s collection here was relatively small. I also recovered a small bead. Willey (1953: 153) recovered a white-painted stirrup-spout that he identified as being a Middle Virú corporate ware style, but Ford (archives) apparently classified it as a Moche/Huancaco-style sherd. Most interestingly, I recovered a complete spondylus (thorny oyster) shell from the damaged area at the south side of the site. Both halves of the bivalve shell were recovered. The thorns had been removed from one half but the other half appeared unworked. This would have been a very rich item and likely came from a burial (although Willey noted that he observed no evidence of grave looting at the site and neither did I), but it also could have been used in ceremonial activities or could have been ceremonially buried.

Willey dated the site entirely to the Middle Virú Period and the present seriation agrees. Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey’s description of the site is very general and there are other undocumented mounds in the vicinity, but the mound that I map as this site is located close to where Willey located this site on the master valley map. This mound fits Willey’s size descriptions fairly closely but is shorter than he described. This can be explained by heavy damage at the south side of the mound that was apparently not present when Willey surveyed this site. Of course, it is possible that I have simply located the incorrect site but I do not think this is the case.

V-277

Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.084 ha
Location: 8.4509° S, 78.8446° W

Description: This small circular mound (25 m diameter, 3 m height) is a residential mound with tapia and handmade adobes indicating house structures (Willey 1953: 130). The site is heavily disturbed by looting activity and a road that cut through it. This road, which was the main road from El Carmelo to Santa Elena when Willey conducted his survey, appears to have been replaced but there is still a road crossing a small, round mound in the area near where Willey located this site, and I map this as the site. This is located in the lower Virú Valley about half a kilometre north of the present location of the river. Willey dated this site to Middle Virú and the present seriation agrees.

Mapping accuracy: Good. There are several mounds in this area including V-276 (Late Virú) just to the north and several undocumented mounds. The mound that I mapped is of a size and shape that fits with Willey’s description and is also cut by a road, so I am confident that I have relocated the correct site.

V-278

Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Midden
Size: 0.683 ha
Location: 8.4405° S, 78.8094° W
Description: Willey (1953: 445) only refers to this site as a midden or additional occupation area but does not describe it or its setting. I consider a medium-sized sand dune with modern structures and possibly some evidence of looting near where Willey depicted this site on the master valley map to be this site; Ford (archives) describes this site as an occupied sand dune on a road, which fits the description of the dune I map. This dune has clearly been cut into and squared-off by agricultural fields and a modern road. There is a much larger sand dune with possible evidence of archaeological occupation located 350 m southeast of this and several other small dunes or mounds within a 500 m radius of the dune mapped here. Willey dated this site to Middle Virú and the current seriation agrees with this.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. See description above.

V-281
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Midden
Size: 0.138 ha
Location: 8.3993° S, 78.8914° W

Description: Willey (1953: 120) only described this site as a Middle Virú shell midden located on the sandy north margin of the lower Virú Valley among the sand dunes that stretch for several kilometers back from the beach. This site is located approximately 1km east of the present-day shoreline but the shore might have been closer when the site was occupied. Willey does not describe the size of this site at all and Ford (archives) simply described it as “extensive.” Willey noted that this margin was adjacent to what had formerly been cultivated land, implying that it was not cultivated when he surveyed the site, but he did not outright suggest that this land was cultivated during Middle Virú times. Cultivation has expanded significantly in this area in recent decades with large corporate asparagus farms stretching between the coast and the Panamerican Highway for several kilometers north of the valley margin and it is likely that this site has been ploughed under by these fields. Older satellite imagery, available through Google Earth, appears to predate any field expansion in this area (although there are other signs of disturbance visible in the vicinity) and reveals an area of looter’s pits very near to where Willey depicted this site on the master valley site map; given that Willey describes this as a low-lying shell midden it is not clear why it would be looted or if there are undocumented cemeteries near this site, but I have nevertheless mapped this looted area as the site. This area has been ploughed over in recent years. Willey dated this site to Middle Virú and the current seriation agrees with this.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey did not describe the size or specific location of this site and it is impossible to identify a small, low midden like this on satellite imagery. A small area of looter’s pits is visible on satellite imagery very near to where Willey located this site and I have mapped this area as the site, although it is not clear whether this looting activity took place at the site or at a nearby undocumented cemetery.

V-283
Time period(s): Middle Virú through Late Epoch
Type: Midden
Size: 7.837 ha  
Location: 8.4268° S, 78.8979° W  
Description: Willey described this as a midden of abundant crushed white shell and organic material with a diameter of 500 m, spread over a series of small, low dunes (1953: 311). Willey considered this site to date purely to the Late Epoch (La Plata Period) but re-seriation of Ford’s collection shows it to have been used from Middle Virú to the Late Epoch. I have fortunately stumbled upon this site (thinking it to date exclusively to the Late Epoch when my project was in its early days) while going to visit Huaca Prieta de Guanape (V-314), a major Pre-Ceramic (Cerro Prieto Period in the Virú sequence) site just east of this midden. Because of this I can confirm the location of this midden despite Willey’s very general description, and this area of white shell shows clearly on satellite imagery. This site lies in the low-lying dune land behind the beach and today is over a kilometer from the shoreline but was likely on the shore when the site was occupied just as V-314, 200 m farther inland and at least two millennia older than V-283, was likely on the shore when it was occupied.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey did not describe the precise location of this site but because I inadvertently surveyed the site I am able to confirm its location. An extensive area of white ground, the reflection of the sun-bleached seashell covering this midden, is clearly visible on satellite imagery and this is mapped as the site.

**V-284**

Time period(s): Middle Virú  
Type: Midden  
Size: 0.757 ha  
Location: 8.4377° S, 78.8905° W  
Description: Willey (1953: 120) only very briefly described this site as a shell midden in the open dune-covered land that extends for several kilometers behind the beach in lower Virú Valley. This site lay along the margin of cultivated land when Willey surveyed it. There are several agricultural fields in the area today as well as a substantial amount of uncultivated land, although the precise location of this site cannot be determined. Willey dated the site to the Middle Virú Period and the current seriation fits this date as well.

Mapping accuracy: Poor. Willey did not describe the size or precise location of this site and no features typical of shell middens are visible on satellite imagery in this area. I have drawn a circle with a diameter of 100 m over the point where Willey placed this site on the master map of all valley sites in order to account for its approximate location and its inferred size.

**V-290**

Time period(s): Early and Middle Virú  
Type: Civic-Ceremonial Centre  
Size: 0.719 ha  
Location: 8.4599° S, 78.8508° W
Description: As far as civic-ceremonial centres go this site is relatively small, but it nevertheless is of an architectural type—pyramid mound or civic space with extensive residential areas—that Willey (1953: 90) noted was common during later periods, and he felt that this site was a prototype of the site type. This assertion was based, however, on an incorrect date. Willey dated this site to the Early Virú Period based on Ford’s ceramic collection, but this collection included a greater quantity of Castillo Plain wares, dating to Middle and Late Virú, than of HPP, more typical of Early Virú. In his notes, Ford considered this site to date from Early to Middle Virú but in his summary form he dated it only to Early Virú. The current seriation of this site shows that it clearly was occupied during both the Early and Middle Virú Periods but it is not possible to determine which period the architecture dated to or whether this was an earlier site that was later expanded into a true civic-ceremonial centre but one of the necessary assumptions of the current study is that site types and overall size are essentially static. There is a line of several similar but smaller mounds extending between 200 m and 750 m to the north-northwest of this site but it is not clear if these are associated with V-290.

The overall extent of the site is 100 m x 190 m, ovate and oriented northeast-southwest, and the site contains three mounds or platforms, the central and highest one being 6.5 m above the field level (Willey 1953: 90). The structure was made of packed earth or tapia and Willey did not note any evidence of individual adobes. Willey was hesitant to consider the central platform mound to be a true pyramid mound—built to be monumental and for a civic function—but thought that it might possibly be. Although I did not survey this site, based on Willey’s description I consider this central mound to truly be civic space, and since this site has attached residential space the site can be considered a true, though small, civic-ceremonial centre.

Mapping accuracy: Good. Willey did not describe the precise location of this site but there is a large mound near to where he depicted this site on the master site map. This mound fits Willey’s description of the shape and orientation of this site and there are no other visible mounds in the area that fit these descriptions in any way. This mound is somewhat smaller than what Willey described, however; Willey may have measured the site incorrectly, lower parts of the mound may have been ploughed over, or both.

V-294

Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 0.152 ha
Location: 8.4614° S, 78.8654° W

Description: Willey (1953: 130) describes this site as a “rambling, complex structure on the order of some of those in the Gallinazo Group” (the southernmost mounds of the Gallinazo Group lie about 1km to the west of this mound and nearby V-295, V-296, and several undocumented mounds, but these sites were apparently not considered part of the Gallinazo Group). This site lies about 400 m north of El Carmelo and is adjacent to a road that Willey described as being the road from El Carmelo to Pur Pur, though the road network in the valley is considerably different today. The site consists of two main parts, a 20 m², 4 m high section with an attached apron that measures 18 m x 25 m and is 2.25 m high. Willey observed rectangular adobes and evidence of tapia architecture and classified this as a residential site rather than as any sort of civic structure. This site dates to Middle Virú on the basis of both the old and current seriation.
Willey described V-295, immediately north of V-294, as being a series of three mounds connected to each other by strips of sterile soil, and the entire V-295 group was connected to V-294 by a similar strip (1953: 204). For this reason, Willey dated V-295 to both Middle and Late Virú, although its ceramic collection dated to Late Virú (I date V-295 solely to Late Virú and do not include it in this study). Willey did not describe how far apart from each other any of these mounds were nor did he depict any of these sites by map or photograph. It is likely that the connector strips between these mounds have been ploughed over since Willey conducted his survey. There are more than the five mounds that Willey described between these three sites in the area, but some lie farther east or west of the road and I think it likely that Willey only surveyed the sites right on the road. I surveyed this area on November 18, 2010, but I had difficulty identifying which mound was which and could not clear up this confusion in the field. Re-examining my notes and this area on satellite imagery, however, I am reasonably confident that I have correctly identified each site as Willey documented them.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Although he did not include this site as part of the Gallinazo Group, Bennett (1950: fig. 2) depicted this site on a map of the Gallinazo Group. Still, there is some confusion separating this site from V-295, to which it was formerly attached (see description above). I map the southernmost mound of this cluster as V-294.

V-296
Time period(s): Middle Virú
Type: Residential
Size: 1.09 ha
Location: 8.458° S, 78.8656° W

Description: Willey (1953: 130) describes this as a large mound, 100 m x 175 m in extent, with a 5.1 m high central platform. Willey classified the site as a residential or dwelling mound rather than a pyramid mound or civic-ceremonial centre because he could not identify how the central mound was built. When I surveyed the site on November 18, 2010, it was heavily disturbed by looting activity, by a canal that had cut across the north side of the site and separated a small prominence from the rest of the site, and possibly by agricultural activity that separated this mound from a similar one to the northwest (Willey did not describe this second mound at all and it is not clear if it was actually part of a single mound when Willey surveyed the area. Willey did not describe heavy looting damage here, either). The damage to the site has revealed further evidence of the mound’s architecture with sections of adobe (both cane-marked and plain rectangular) and tapia walls exposed in several places. Despite the abundance of looter’s pits there is relatively little human bone scattered about. I recovered corporate ware sherds diagnostic of both Middle Virú (one sherd of Gallinazo Broad-Line Incised and one possible sherd of Virú Negative) and to Late Virú (Moche/Huancaco style) as well as Castillo Incised, a decorated domestic ware style common in both Middle and Late Virú. I observed very few lithic artifacts and Ford made a large collection of domestic ware ceramics at this site. Taken together I consider this site to be residential and domestic in nature with some Middle and Late Virú burials (the latter of which were likely intrusive. Middle Virú burials were frequently made in house floors), but further research could reveal this site and the nearby documented and undocumented mounds to be a true civic-ceremonial centre, either part of the Gallinazo Group or a separate, perhaps competing centre located very close to, but separate from, the Gallinazo Group.
Willey dated this site to Middle Virú and the present seriation agrees with this date. Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Although he did not include this site as part of the Gallinazo Group, Bennett (1950: fig. 2) depicted this site on a map of the Gallinazo Group and it can be relocated accurately. Willey did not describe the shape or details of this site, only its maximum size; this map is smaller than what Willey described, even taking into account the damage to it, but I remain confident that I have relocated the correct site. There is a smaller and lower mound just northwest of this mound and this second mound appears to be at least in part archaeological (Bennett’s map shows both mounds), but Willey apparently did not consider it part of the site and it is not mapped here, but it likely was contemporary and associated with V-296.

**V-298, V-300 (San Francisco Mounds No. 1 and 3)**

**Time period(s):** Middle Virú through Late Epoch  
**Type:** Civic-Ceremonial Centre  
**Size:** 0.98 ha  
**Location:** 8.4022° S, 78.7605° W  
**Description:** These mounds, along with V-299 (San Francisco Mound No. 2, dating to Late Virú and the Late Epoch and not included in this analysis) form a complex of three large mounds in the San Francisco district near the northern margin of the middle valley, approximately 2 km due north of Virú Pueblo. Willey dated all three of these mounds to the Late Epoch (Tomaval Period) with a small Early Virú component at V-300; the current seriation shows that V-298 and V-300 were first occupied during the Middle Virú Period and continued into later periods. The ceramic collections from these sites are not particularly large (V-298 is especially low at 52 domestic ware ceramic sherds) and this could be a source of error in the seriation of these sites, but at the same time it bolsters the interpretation that these mounds were built for civic/ceremonial or community purposes rather than as residential structures. A series of cemeteries are stretched along the north margin of the valley in this area, at least one of which (V-11) dates to Early and Middle Virú, but it is unclear whether these cemeteries are associated with the San Francisco mounds.

The mounds are all quite large and are clearly monumental structures. The largest, V-298, is 75 m x 100 m and the flat summit platform is 5.5 m high except for a small platform built on top of the mound, which rises an additional 3.5 m high (Willey 1953: 287). This additional platform is 18 m x 26 m in extent and is built on the southwest margin of the mound, with a terrace (7.5 m x 26 m) running 1 m lower along its northeast side. Based on what he was able to observe on the site surface, sides, and in looter’s pits, the entire site was built of rock-and-earth or clay fill with terraced rock-faced sides. Willey did not publish a photograph or map of this site and I have not visited it but this description makes it clear that the small summit platform and terrace were the central focus of community activity at this site, and it is likely that the entire summit of the mound was a large, raised plaza. There is no evidence of a residential occupation here and the small number of ceramics supports the interpretation that this site is entirely civic space; therefore I classify it as civic rather than civic-ceremonial centre. Ford (archives) noted that despite the looting activity there is no evidence of graves at this site.

V-299 is long and rectangular and is smaller than V-298 but is also large and high (50 m x 85 m with a highest point of 6.8 m) and is located 350 m northeast of V-298 (Willey 1953: 288); this site is not included in my analysis, however. V-300, located 60 m southeast of V-299, is the
smallest of the mounds and measures 60 m x 60 m at its base (Willey 1953: 288). This mound appears to have sustained more damage than the other mounds in recent decades since it is smaller than what Willey described (~45 m x 55 m as measured on satellite imagery) and is ovate whereas Willey described it as square. The mound is flat-topped and 6-7 m high with no smaller platforms or terraces, unlike the other two local mounds. Willey thought that this mound was made of earth and clay. Its height, monumentality, and association with the other two local mounds indicates that it too was built for a civic function rather than as residential space.

Mapping accuracy: Excellent. Although Willey’s descriptions for these sites are general and he did not map any of the sites specifically, his description of the size, shape, and location relative to one another closely match what is visible on satellite imagery. All three of these sites are located approximately 400 m farther west from where Willey placed them on the master valley map, however, and this level of inaccuracy has implications for those other sites throughout the valley that could not be relocated as securely.