

### ***3. Archaeological Background***

3.1 There has been no previous evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity at the site. The closest prehistoric sites are the recently excavated Bronze Age cairn situated at Cobden Edge and the Bronze Age barrows at Brown Low and Ludworth Intakes. Evidence for the Iron Age/Romano-British period in the Stockport Borough is virtually non-existent, with only scant poorly recorded remains coming from the Bramhall area. In fact excavation has identified only two native settlement sites in the Greater Manchester area. These are Castle Steads, Bury and Great Woollen Hall Farm, Salford, both of which are fortified enclosures. Roman evidence in the area has been restricted to the site of the fort and vicus at Melandra and a possible site on Werneth Low (a single sherd of Roman pottery was discovered at the site). The place name of Mellor (meaning bare hill) is of pre-English origin as is Werneth and Cheadle and all three may have had a long history of settlement.

3.2 Apart from place-names there is little evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity in the area. Other than the three names mentioned most major place-names in the borough probably derive from this period. Features and artifacts from this period are also few with an Anglo-Saxon cross from Cheadle and the twin cylindrical shafts known as Robin Hoods Picking Rods on Ludworth Moor which are very similar to the Bow Stones located in Lyme Park. It has been suggested that the font within Mellor church is of Anglo-Saxon origin. However, this is yet to be confirmed.

3.3 It was recorded by the Reverend Marriot in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that ‘some years ago’ digging in the churchyard for the construction of a vault revealed what appears to have been the remains of an infilled ditch. He also reports that ‘many years before’ the same feature was found during the sinking of the foundations of the extension to the house now known as the Old Vicarage. “A deep fosse was constructed originally, for the inclosure of the position. In subsequent ages it had the fate to be filled up, and the name and place of it passed into oblivion” (Marriot, 1810, *The Antiquities of Lyme and its Vicinity*).