Chapter 9   MONITORING AT POLICY/STRATEGIC LEVEL

9.1   As the recommended transport strategy will take a long time to materialise, monitoring will be needed to evaluate the effects of the policies to identify further studies and modifications needed during implementation, and feed back into future decision making. It is very important to monitor the assumptions and forecasts used in the SEA against the actual traffic growth and the related environmental impacts arising from the future transport strategy. Adjustment to the proposed mitigation measures will then be required before the recommended implementation date to ensure that the pollution level does not exceed the predicted level. This process can be used to confirm the validity of the recommended mitigation measures and to inform future decisions.

Monitoring and Auditing Framework

9.2   One approach to avoid environmental degradation is to adopt the precautionary principle for implementation of the recommended transport strategy. Up-to-date information on vehicle number and class, vehicle-kilometres-travelled (vkt) and the related traffic emissions, ambient air quality and noise levels at sensitive receivers could act as indicators to highlight the changing environmental conditions arising from the proposed strategy. Suitable mitigation measures could then be implemented before environmental conditions deteriorate further. Furthermore, the population, GDP growth, private and goods vehicle fleets, and cross boundary traffic are also fundamental strategic parameters that should be monitored so as to check whether there is a need for review of the transport strategy and/or its environmental performance. The key assumptions are presented in Chapter 4 of this report. In addition, the following table summarises the vkt predicted by the traffic model:

Table 9.1
Summary of vkt Predicted by the Traffic Model

Transport Scenarios	Predicted Annual vkt (Total)
2001	12,892,114,000
2006 High Growth	15,905,851,000
2006 Medium Growth	14,993,795,000
2011 High Growth	19,861,301,000
2011 Medium Growth	17,271,200,000
2016 High Growth (High End)	26,789,277,000
2016 High Growth (Low End)	23,815,905,000
2016 Medium Growth	19,309,282,000
2016 Low Growth	15,640,215,000

Notes:
(i)   The vkt predicted by the traffic model has been adjusted to account for minor roads.
(ii)   Figures presented to the nearest thousand.

9.3   A simple way to monitor environmental impacts from the recommended strategy is to use the updated vehicle numbers and class and compare them against the projected number. Any significant deviation from the projection will trigger a systematic review of the knock-on environmental effects such as the projected pollutant emissions or