Speculation that Shandong Ruyi was in talks to buy the UK’s Arcadia Group may have been denied by both parties but it has certainly focused attention on the Chinese firm’s global ambitions in the fashion sector.

A company spokesperson told Fashion Network that the company’s aim is to “develop into the ‘LVMH group of China’.”

And while that kind of ambitious goal is one that a number of expanding firms have set themselves over recent decades, Shandong Ruyi is one that could achieve it.
The group is big and getting bigger and already has a significant presence in the luxury and premium fashion markets.

“Ruyi has positioned itself as the largest holding group of global fashion brands with manufacturing capability,” the spokesperson added. “It has a clear brand development roadmap. The brands it is to acquire have to be aligned with its corporate development strategy and positioning, have a close link with the capital market, boast good development and high growth prospects, plus be well-loved and recognised by consumers, able to sway fashion trends and superb in design.”

On that Arcadia rumour, the spokesperson added that “Ruyi has no new brand acquisition plan at the moment, but it plans to continue to look for suitable acquisition targets in accord with its development direction.”

The company’s most recently-announced purchase was that of Bally, which was the third and final of JAB Holding’s luxury fashion brands to be sold after Jimmy Choo and Belstaff also found deep-pocketed new owners.

But prior to that it has swept up a basket of higher-end brands including Gieves & Hawkes, Cerruti 1881 and the fast-expanding SMCP that owns the Sandro, Maje and Claudie Pierlot retail labels.

And this basket of brands perhaps explains why Arcadia chains such as Topshop, Dorothy Perkins and Miss Selfridge wouldn't fit into the Shandong Ruyi portfolio given their more mass-market positioning.